JUNE 30 — JULY 6, 1979

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Eve's Weekly

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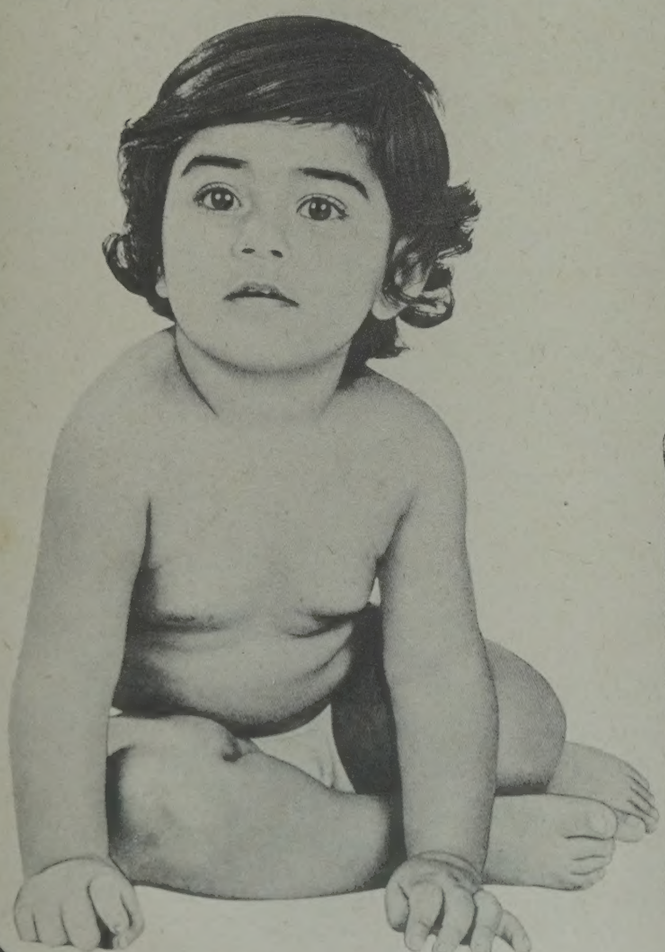

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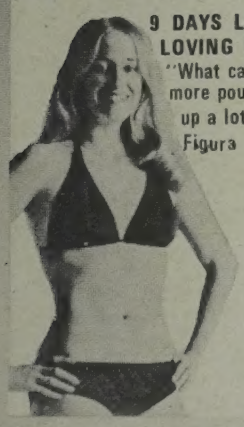

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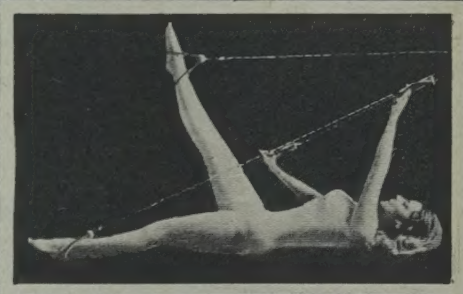

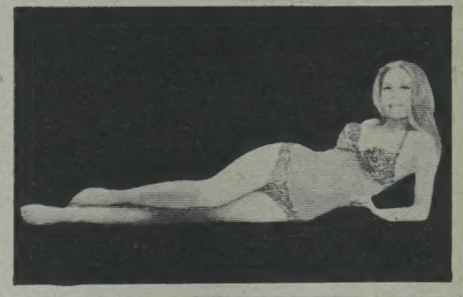

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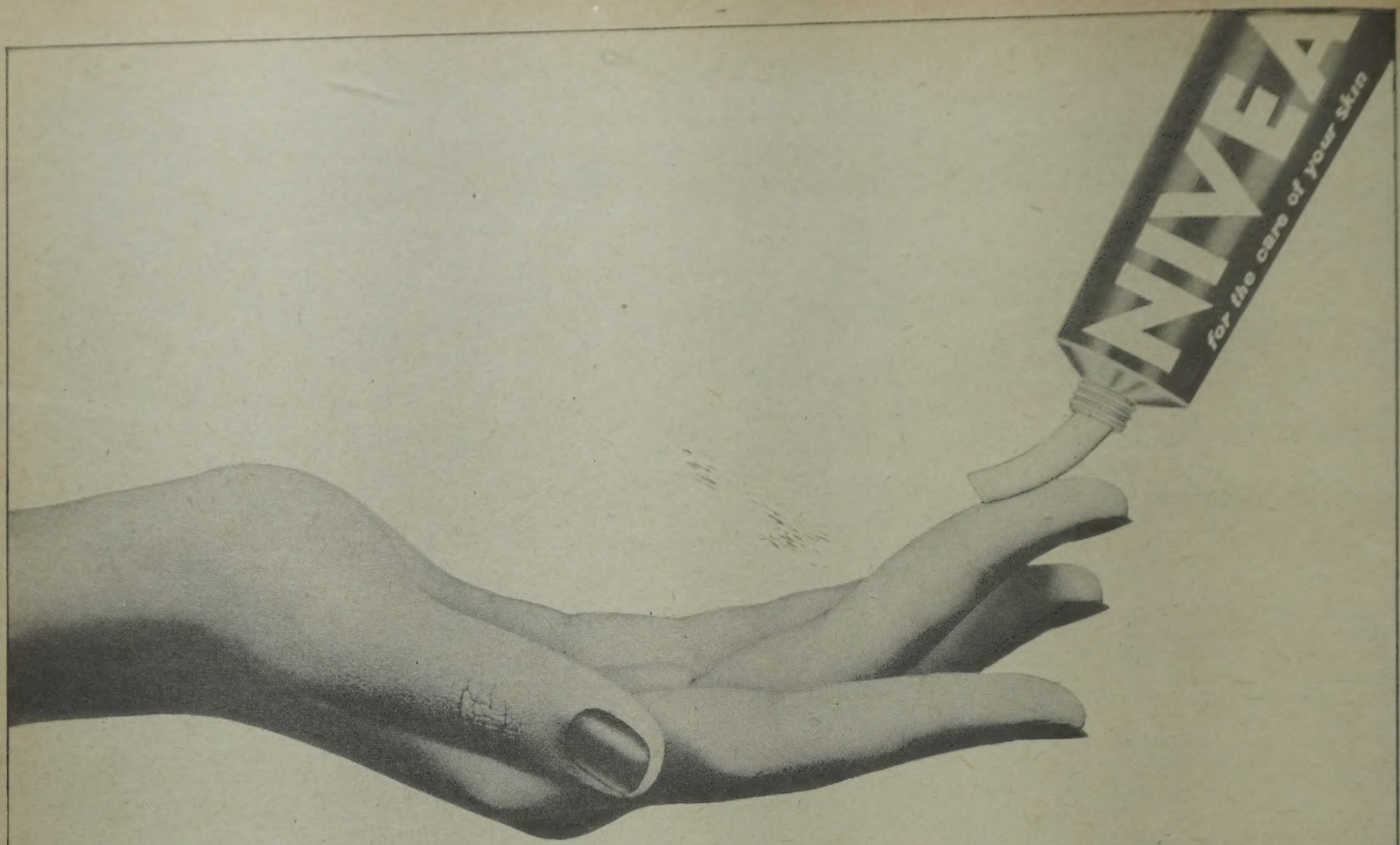

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SHREELEKHA KULKARNI

Popularly known as Rakhi. Born in Belgaum, August 29, 1954. Educated at St. Agnes' Convent, and Nirmala Niketan, Bombay. Has worked in the Taj Mahal and Ambassador hotels in the housekeeping department and as Demonstrator in Hindustan Lever and Ahmed Oil Mills. Presently a model, she has completed a course in German and training in rifle shooting, mountaineering. She also plays the sitar.

Photograph : Taiyeb Badshah

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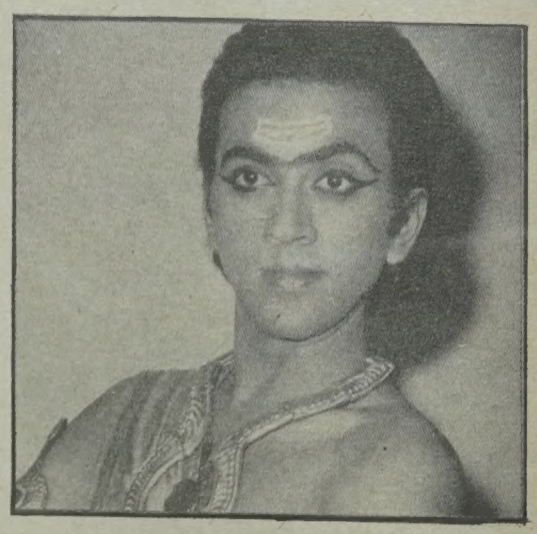
THIS WEEK

MALE DANCERS : Trespassers on Female Territory?

Certainly not, say the three young men we interviewed, for whom dance is an all-consuming, full-time career. To support their case, they point to Lord Nataraja who, after all, they say, is the supreme divine dancer.

Page 12.



AN SOS FROM A MALE DANCER

Kalakshetra-trained Dhananjayan lashes out at the discriminatory treatment he says is accorded to male dancers.

Page 15.

A DANCING COUPLE

Together they have set up a dancing troupe and are popular as a dancing duo.

Page 16.

MEN AS WOMEN

In the Bhavai folk theatre, men play all the roles — male and female.

Page 42.

AN IMPOSTER

"The exotic, the luscious, sensational Fifi!" of many a cabaret is an imposter!

Page 45.

ALSO

Do-it-yourself : A pincushion for your sewing kit — **Page 19** Women in Focus : Rosemary Sachdev, Dina Patel — **Page 21** Film Interview : Parveen Babi—**Page 23** "My Darling Clementina": Beginning the serialization of a brand new Mills and Boon novel — **Page 24** Eve Today : Thiripura Sundari, alias Lakshmi, Tamil novelist — **Page 29** Artist of the Month : Anupam Sud — **Page 35** IYC Feature : In and out of school, dropping out in the year of the child — **Page 40** Paper Pattern Instructions — **Page 46** Quiz 2 — **Page 50** Answers to Quiz 1 — **Page 47.**

REGULAR FEATURES

Your Page/**9**, Readers' Voice/**11**, Fashion/**26**, Cookery/**31**, Comics/**34**, Passing Through/**38**, Frankly Speaking/**47**, People and Events/**48**, Horoscope/**50**.

THE MOOD

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YOUR PAGE

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1st PRIZE

COLLECTING ALIMONY

"It is a great shame that the vociferous champions of women's lib never brought the issue of alimony for men to the fore. But then they were never fighting for real justice; only for feathering their nest", declared a recent editorial in a leading Indian newspaper. According to the learned writer, women often go through divorces merely to collect alimony! If, after the International Year for Women had focused attention on the difficulties of women (the majority of which are caused by men), editors can still believe, and propagate, such juvenile rot, there's very little hope for women's lib.

For one thing, leave alone women paying alimony to men, how many males are there who pay alimony regularly to wives whom they've divorced on flimsy grounds? Secondly, how can women be expected to pay alimony to men when, because of male chauvinism, they either don't get jobs or are paid much less for the same work as men?

A final word of advice to the writer and men of his ilk. Don't judge women by your own opportunistic standards. The majority of women prefer the love of a husband and the security of marriage to alimony and divorce.

MRS. PUSHPALATHA KAMATH, Bombay

Actually, we think it only fair that a divorced wife, who is in a better financial position than the husband, should pay alimony. Equality has to be a two-way street. However, not many women can afford to pay alimony — nor can they afford to be deprived of alimony, especially when, there are children to support. But, it's still a man's world and men can, and do, get away with murder.

2nd PRIZE

MARRIAGE MEANS. . .

According to reports, two American women, Gail Kennedy and Freddi Kaser, have hit upon a novel means of earning — 'rent-a-wife'. For twenty dollars an hour, they are willing to play wives to men "who could use a wife." It seems we are willing to do away with marriage but not the semblance of it! It brings us inevitably to the question of what marriage really means. Like 'motherhood' marriage has many meanings. Your Special Issue (Men's Liberation) has revealed that many men marry for companionship and children. Others, mostly women, marry for security, for prestige or merely in order to conform to pattern. A few marry for love. It would be interesting to find out what impels individuals towards a commitment that binds and intertwines their destiny so closely with that of another. To my mind, the best definition of marriage is 'the discovery of two souls by two souls'. It comprehends both joy and sorrow, the victories and the vicissitudes.

LEELA RAMASWAMY, Bangalore

The two "wives on hire", we read, refused to bestow sexual favours as part of the deal. So, it would seem they were only earning an honest living doing what they were best qualified for! This does not necessarily mean that such offers emanate from a "craving for marriage".

3rd PRIZE

FOR THE CHILD

How many parents face the painful experience of seeing their children beaten at school? Have their angry protests received redress? No!

When a protesting parent approaches the school head, she is placated and sent back with a promise to reprimand the teacher concerned. But the result is worse. The children, caught between the parents' complaints and the teachers' tempers, are beaten again for carrying tales. Teachers who resort to corporal punishment are cases for the psychiatrist. They should realise that it is at this initial stage that a child's personality is moulded, and a teacher's influence on a child's all-round development is very great indeed.

A child spends nearly eight hours of each day at school. In fact his school life constitutes his entire childhood. The U.N. Declaration of the Rights of the Child, says, "The child is entitled to grow up in an atmosphere of affection, moral and material security"; "The child shall in all circumstances be the first to receive protection and relief"; "The child shall be protected against all forms of neglect, cruelty and exploitation".

The least we can do for children in the Year of the Child, is to see that this crucial period of their lives is made a happy and memorable one for them.

MRS. MOHINI RAMALINGAM, Pollachi

Corporal punishment is ugly and is often taken to great extremes by misguided teachers. We do believe that love and a firm attitude can accomplish much more than the cane.

FOR THE TEACHER

We have had the Woman's year. We are having the Children's year. Let us also have the Teacher's year, or let us incorporate it in the Year of the Child.

In this year we aim at giving the child a better deal. . . Whether this will be realised, or whether it will be just a flash in the pan, remains to be seen. But let us try to extend to the primary teachers, who teach the children the three Rs and on whom falls the responsibility of moulding a child into a better individual, certain privileges, too. The teacher is closely related to the child and yet, a primary teacher has no social footing and is viewed with a mental derogatory shrug. A teacher's job is no great shakes, moneywise. Must it also lack in prestige?

HYMA BAL, Tellicherry

And now a bouquet for the teacher, after the brickbat, above. Well, let's say we have "Years" for the deserving: Women, Children, and who else?

HARMFUL PUBLICITY

After the gruesome murder of the two Chopra children in New Delhi, the pictures of the murderers — Billa and Ranga — have appeared and are still appearing in the daily newspapers and the magazines.

A murderer has no value for the life of others; and on his own life, too, he sets little value. He knows too well that his own life will be cut short one day. Unable to gain recognition in any other field, they gain it by perpetrating hideous crimes. By giving too much publicity to them aren't we encouraging other criminals and giving them the impetus to do the same and then die "heroically"?

The persons who really deserve this kind of publicity are the young man who followed the murderers on his motor-bike or the four jawans who handed them over to the police. It will act as an inspiration to other persons who are brave enough to intervene in the event of witnessing such a crime.

MRS. SHAKUNTALA BHATNAGAR, Ajmer

Publicity works (or "unworks") in strange ways. The pictures of murderers arouse curiosity, hatred, speculation — a variety of reactions. The effect can be both "deterring" or "goading", depending on the type of mind which views these visual items. As for publicizing the "rescuers", even that can prove problematic for the people concerned. . .

DO YOU KNOW THE SECRET OF LOOKING YOUNG?

□ Certainly you do a lot to look your best. You try to get enough rest though you wouldn't dream of leaving a good party because it was time for beauty sleep. You keep a sharp eye on your diet and your weight (every morning on the scales, right?). You've even learned to sew great-looking clothes. Good for you.

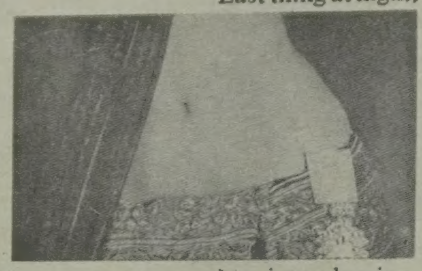
Now, how about your skin? May be you believe you haven't yet reached the age to be concerned about how young—or old—you look. But think of this. Exposure to the environment, artificial "weather" like steam heat, even some cosmetics can dry your skin, so you may easily look older...at a surprisingly young age. And you can't depend on nature. Sooner than you may expect, your skin's own moisture level decreases, so your skin becomes dryer and dull. Then the radiant, youthful look you've taken for granted starts to slip away.

Isn't it time you discovered the secret shared by women in many parts of the world who have enjoyed the beautiful benefits of a mysterious beauty fluid that can help you look younger? This remarkable fluid is known Vitamin E Skin Oil.

Smooth on Vitamin E. Within moments, you'll notice your skin becoming softer and smoother. And your face takes on a marvelous lustre and radiance. There's dewy glow even without makeup...a look you'll love and other people will be able to see. (Would it surprise you to have a friend ask what you're using to look so great?)

The beauty fluid penetrates your skin remarkably quickly. A wealth of pure moisture, tropical oil and precious emollients begin to work instantly to help ease away dryness. Working hand-in-hand with nature in any mysterious way, Vitamin E helps maintain your skin's moisture balance. Even more, the skincherishing fluid helps maintain that natural moisture so your skin can become softer, smoother, younger looking. Even those little laugh lines that may have crept up on you can become less noticeable from the very first day you use Vitamin E Skin Oil

When should Vitamin E fit into your life? You'll probably want to use the beauty fluid at least twice every single day. First thing in the morning either before your cosmetics (Vitamin E is so fast-penetrating that its marvelous under makeup) or alone, to let your skin enjoy a marvellously moist climate. Last thing at night,



to pamper your skin into sleeping hours. Your skin will let you know other times it would benefit from Vitamin E.. whenever it feels dry and its moisture content should be increased.

You could, of course, keep this beautiful secret to yourself, letting family and friends wonder what you're doing to look so glowy. But, like so many good things you can't keep to yourself, Vitamin E is a secret you'll eventually want to share.

Beauty Secrets

When you notice those first little laugh lines, give them special attention. Dryness can make them show more, so dab on extra Vitamin E Skin Oil whenever the thought occurs.

* * *

When you've discovered Vitamin E, you won't want a single drop to go to waste. After you've smoothed the beauty fluid on your face and throat, massage your elbows with Vitamin E. You may not see that particular dry area, but others certainly do.

* * *

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INTER COMMUNICATIONS

Do pretty women make good wives?

What pretty women and young men have to say about it.

Get your copy of the July issue of MIRROR

- **Why do they hide behind other names?** Famous authors and their pseudonyms.
- **Facing bereavement:** How does one face the death of a loved one?
- **Haro Hara:** Festival in Bangalore of self torture for the Lord.
- **He who heals with sun—power:** the Swamiji of Pondicherry.
- **Why do cyclones occur?**
- **The re-incarnation of Audrey Rose.**

MIRROR
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READERS' VOICE

Most articles raise a question, a comment or at least a criticism. Write them down and mail them to us!

ABUSE OF DOMESTICS

I fully endorse Anita Udvayar's allegation (May 19) about our own abuse of domestic servants, who are treated like beasts of burden, rudely and abusively spoken to, underfed, underpaid, overworked and driven to despair and petty theft. Anyone who does an honest day's work deserves a decent wage.

I believe that servants are a disposable entity for the middle classes. If the women were organised, the children disciplined, and the men more cooperative, household chores could be done methodically and without the intrusion to ones' privacy that servants can be. Besides, we do tend to indulge our gastronomic whims beyond need — three meals a day and high tea are quite in order for most people. The results: gross fat, ill health, laziness and mental laxity. Like I'd say, give your body a break, all it needs is one good cooked meal a day.

I think ones' home is ones' pride and joy — here one must certainly look to the west where everyone works, domestic help is out of the question for the middle classes, and yet homes are so pretty and characteristic of the people who live in them.

TASNEEM FAKIR MOHAMMED, Dubai

FRUSTRATED LOVER TURNED MURDERER

With reference to your report on the murder of Harshmita Vakil by Indra Gidwani (May 19), I never expected Bombayites to be so callous, careless and crude. A little feeling on the part of the onlookers could have saved the life of the innocent girl. Instead of handing the murderer over to the police, he should have been lynched to death on the spot. He doesn't deserve any sort of alternative justice whatsoever.

K. P. RAJAN, Bombay.

ACADEMIC POETASTERS

Indu Jain's verses "I am the jet of air/you the launching pad. . ." (May 26) are banal, forced, shapeless. There are similar, but more touching, lines in some Indian film songs — e.g. "You are the veena, I am the string" or "You are the storm, I the lightning" or **"Tu chanda, mai chandni"**, etc. It would have been better if Ms. Jain had attempted a conscious parody, like "I am the table, you are the chair. . ." Her story, **'The Pest'**, is awkwardly put together. On the whole, Ms. Indu Jain is a poor story-teller and a lousy poet. College lecturers seldom make genuine poets however much they may flog themselves, for they are driven by sheer will-power and opportunism. One has to write under acute emotional stress to achieve poetry.

JALABALA MALAVIYA, New Delhi.

WOMEN AS AGRO-SCIENTISTS

Congratulations for publishing the article "Women as Agro-Scientists" by Dilip Patel and N. V. Shridharan (May 26). This will help many women who are seeking jobs. I myself have decided to join this course after my graduation.

VIMALA B. NAIR, Bombay.

MOTHER FIXATION

In his article, 'The Shriyut and his Mataji' (May 12) Khushwant Singh has developed the concept of the fixation well, but regarding the electra complex he writes, "Neither in fact nor in Indian fiction have I come across stories based on the daughter-father fixation." Here I would like to mention the following stories: "Tinnkan Di Ik Kahani" by Amrita Pritam and "Bubble" by Rajinder Singh Bedi, because these do contain plots based on the electra complex.

DEVINDER MOHINDAR, Jullundur

NEXT WEEK

ISSUE OF JULY 7

THE CHILD'S RIGHT TO A FAMILY

There are millions of orphaned and abandoned children in this country, and many people, in India and abroad, are willing to adopt children, but years of dilly-dallying over a comprehensive adoption law have cost most of the children happy, normal lives.

WOMEN ARE FOR BURNING, OR SO IT SEEMS

Thousands of cases where the wife has been done to death by her in-laws and husband for lack of dowry are being passed off as accidents and suicides, with the police often conniving with the guilty persons. A Delhi women's group is now investigating as many of these cases as possible.

WHERE WOMEN RULE THE ROOST

Here is a society which looks down on a family with many sons. Where the men may eat only after the women are through. Read about the female-dominated society of the Tharus of Rajasthan.

MALE DANCERS:
tresspassers on female territory

NATARAJA, NO DOUBT, WAS THE DIVINE ORIGIN OF THE INDIAN DANCE, BUT DANCING HAS BEEN LARGELY A FEMALE PRESERVE INTO WHICH SOME BRAVE AND TALENTED MEN HAVE STRAYED

Saraswati Swaminathan

"Soft, beautiful and young... breasts raised and taut... bold, sweet, with delicate nature... wide eyes... smile on her lips like a newly blossomed lotus... such are the qualities essential in one who appears on stage as a nartaki."

This is an excerpt from "Abhinaya Darpan", describing the qualities which a female dancer or nartaki should possess. The commentaries on Bharata's "Natya Shastra", such as the "Abhinaya Darpan", "Dasanupaka" or "Nritta Ratnavali" mention only the narkati, and not the nartaka or the male dancer. The "Natya Shastra" itself is a work on dramaturgy. and deals with the nartaka only in the content of the actor.

In the traditional forms of drama, the actors did perform dances, but this was presented as an essential feature of their acting. This has been the practice in traditional drama forms such as Koodiyattam, Bhagwatamela, Nataka, Yakshagana, Bhavai and others.

In the traditional styles of dance, where solo dances were performed as in the case of Bharata Natyam, Odissi, Kathak, etc. men were the teachers or the Gurus, and the performers were women. There have been male performers, such as Uday Shankar, Shanti Bardan, Ram Gopal and, in more recent times, Birju Maharaj and Gopi Krishna. But these dancers have been the exceptions.

"Yet the legends speak of the primeval dancer, Lord Nataraja, who won over Kali in a competition of celestial dance.

The eternal dancer, according to Vaishnava Sampradaya is Natvar or Krishna. The dance of Krishna with the Gopis is the essence of Krishnaleela.

This is the argument put forward by Deepak Majumdar, when I asked him if dancing was not purely a woman's profession. Deepak, 22, has just obtained his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree with distinction, from the Nalanda Nrityakala Mahavidyalaya, affiliated to the University of Bombay. Deepak is a National scholar who has been awarded a scholarship by the Ministry of Education, Government of India.

"I could have chosen a dance form like Kathakali", he said, which is predominantly male-oriented, but I started with Bharata Natyam at the age of six, and I have liked it, so I have stayed with it. I joined Nalanda because dance is my subject and I needed to study the theoretical aspect of Bharata Natyam in a systematic manner if I am to be a choreographer in the future. I plan to work for my the Master's degree, and later do research work."

LEFT: Deepak Majumdar: A Bachelor of Fine Arts in Bharata Natyam.

"I have a right to choose my profession and I have chosen to be a dancer." This was Rohinton Cama, also 22 years old, a dedicated Bharata Natyam dancer.

"My family background is Western oriented. At the age of eleven when I joined Vyjayanthimala Bali's Natyalaya, I did not even know which style of dance I was learning. Over the years I have developed a passion for Bharata Natyam and now it is a part of my life.

"I am a graduate in sociology. I think that a good general education is a necessity. I study the theoretical aspect of dance under my Guru Vyjayanthimala, for I am happy with her teaching."

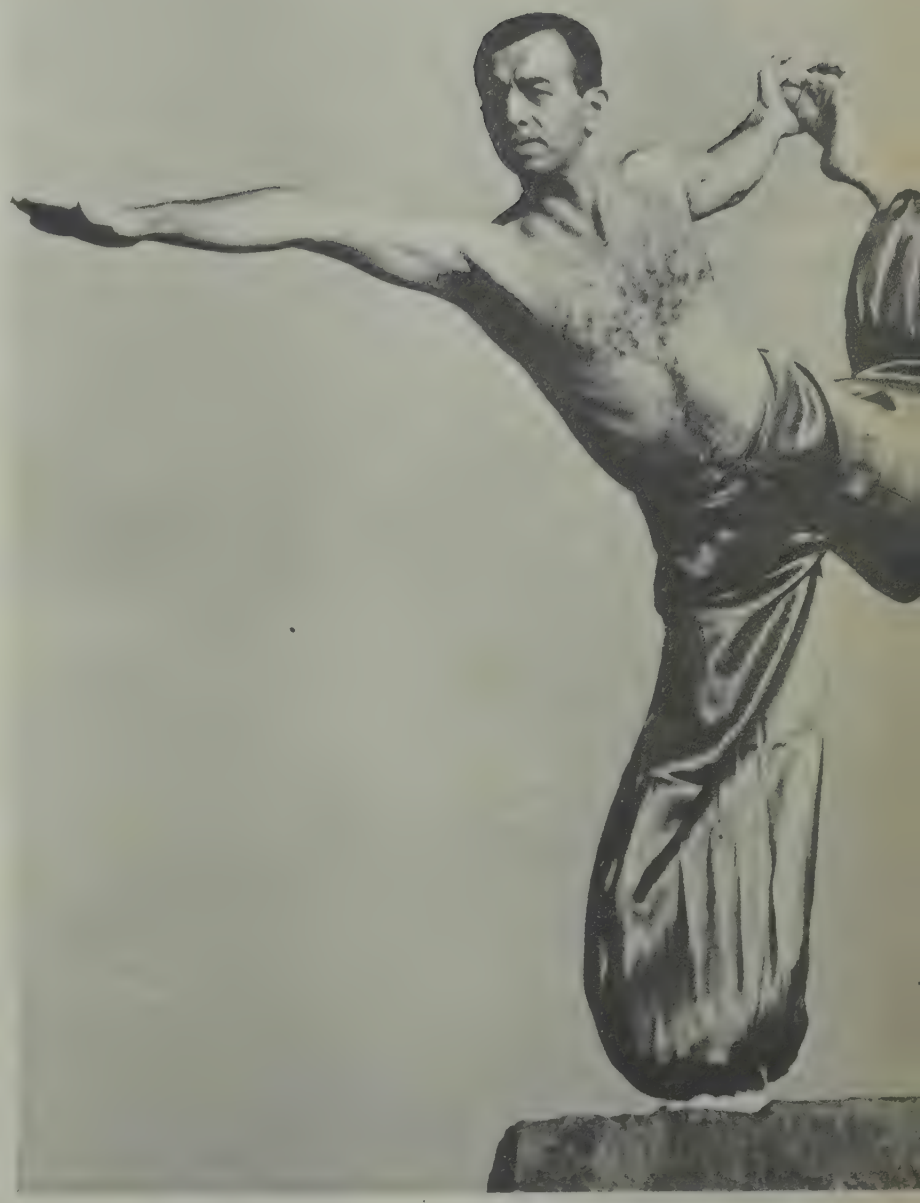
Astad Deboo, 31, is a dancer with maturity and vast experience. Astad has two unique distinctions which are a testimony to his merit as a dancer: firstly, for over a period of ten years Astad had maintained himself on his earnings through dancing and, secondly, he has presented his performances in all the continents.

"I started initially with Kathak at the age of six, and then learnt a little of Kathakali. After getting a B.Com. degree, I left for the West for the technique of Modern Dance fascinated me. What I do now may be classified as a combination of Indian and Modern Dance styles, but it is esentially a style which I have evolved on my own to express my ideas and moods. I am in India to learn more of Kathakali from Guru Krishna Panicker, and also to establish myself as a dancer in my country."

Astad, Rohinton, Deepak — all three of them are aware of the opposition which they have to face in society for their choice of a profession which has been considered to be a woman's field. Initially, their families, though not their parents, did have doubts, but when their performances are seen, their audiences have always accepted them and applauded their artistry.

"The dance numbers which I have choreographed usually project a man and his emotions, although I wouldn't mind dancing the role of a woman if I did conceive of it," says Astad. "I do more of moods of the lover or the bhakta, although I have danced padams related to women. It is not difficult for me because in the Pandananather style which I have taken up, characterisation is presented in a very formal and stylised manner," was Rohinton's view. "All my compositions are based on the Nayaka. In the Tanjavur style of Bharata Natyam, in which I perform, there is a great deal of dramatic characterisation. It would seem odd if I did intense characterisation of a woman."

These young dancers are aware of the changes which should be made in the dance choreography to enhance their presentations. They are highly talented artistes. for it is an intense passion which has moved them to choose dance as their profession.



Astad Deboo combines Indian dance with the western Modern Dance.

LEFT: Rohinton Cama as Nataraja in a pose from a Goa temple.

Behind the choice of Rohinton, Astad and a few other male dancers from the other parts of the country, lies a problem. How far has the public accepted these dancers, and how much of encouragement are we going to extend to them? They do not want to be teachers — not as yet. They will take up teaching when they are older and gain greater maturity and experience.

When they are young they wish to express a traditional art form of aesthetic movement through their vitality and **jofe de vivre.**

The woman dancers also face problems in their careers, but for a large number of them, dancing is only a hobby, or a via media for better opportunities in the marriage market. Even those girls who take up their dancing seriously are not expected to support their families. On the contrary, women dancers are supported and encouraged by their husbands.

The problem oi financial security is a serious one for male dancers. As a student, Deepak has been getting financial assistance from the Government, but as Astad puts it, "The Government is ready to finance our study but not aid us in our career as performers".

The male dancers are appreciated by their audiences, but their basic problem is to organise performances in the different parts of the country. Their problem is not only to preserve the purity of their dance but also make a living to support themselves and their families. This problem is a real one, but a solution. . .?

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S. O. S. From A Male Dancer

A YOUNG MALE DANCER FIERCELY DEFENDS HIS RIGHT TO TAKE UP THIS ART AS A CAREER AND SHOWS THAT THIS RIGHT HAS BEEN RECOGNISED BY THOSE WHO EVOLVED THIS ART FORM

Maithily Jagannathan

At a get-together organised by the Indian Fine Arts Society, Madras, sprightly, dapper, Kalakshetra-trained Dhananjayan lashed out against the emasculated concept of male dancing in Bharata Natyam. Connoisseurs ignore him, sabhas will never call him, while the public sniggers that a male dancer can neither be a male nor a dancer!

"Take a look at our history and you will see that the concept of dance is masculine with Nataraja, as the supreme divine dancer and an embodiment of masculine vigour. The male motif is repeated in our art and literature in the form of the Rajhamsa (royal swan) and the dancing peacock — all symbols of masculine grace.

"In classical, folk and tribal arts, all great dancers and dance promoters have been men. Some examples were Krishna, Arjuna and Ravana in mythology. Bharata and Nandikeswara wrote great treatises on dance and music.

"Actually, all our rituals and every one of our arts is male-oriented. Then why this stigma on male dancing?"

Answering his own question, the handsome young dancer said, "The reason is the idiotic belief that devadasis are the torch-bearers of dancing and are alone qualified to dance!

"This notion was just a convenient excuse for princes and the feudal elite to trap and seduce innocent girls for their own pleasure and then pretend that they were promoting the divine art of dance.

"Thanks to this brain-washing, Bharata Natyam sank to a low status and would never have risen again but for the dedication of a few remarkable persons like Rukmini Arundale and E. Krishna Iyer.

"Actually, in their original forms, Bhagavata Mela, Krishnattam and Terukoothu dances were meant only for male performers. Kathakali is predominantly masculine. It gives importance to male dancers to this day, and its greatest exponents are men. In Western ballet, male and female dancers have equal significance, each balancing the other.

"In fact, this idea of balancing is very much present in Bharata Natyam in the Tandava (male) and Lasya (feminine) dance principles.

"The second foolish notion which has almost destroyed male dancing is that men should dance like women and even dress like them! I know gurus who insist on this. Forcing girlish-looking boys into female clothes has ruined our image.

"A man must dance like a man, with vigour, excitement and some acrobatics," Dhananjaya said and demonstrated some Adavus (poses) for men. The steps and movements were the same as for women, except for the stiff and upright posture of neck and arms, the style of walking, the bold direct glances of the eyes, and feats like lifting the legs up to the palms of the hands.

"The 108 'Karnas' of 'Natya Shastra', evolved for male dancers, showing them through female figures (as in sculptures of the Chidambaram temple), was merely a publicity gimmick like the female form which is used for promoting sales in our advertisements and popular journals. However, you can see the male dancer in sculptures of the Sarangapani Temple at Kumbakonam."

"What about the padams of Kshetragna, the poems of Jayadeva and the dance-dramas of Gopalakrishna Bharathi like "Nandanar Charitam"? he asked.

He gave some examples of Sringara (male), joyful and extrovert, and female — coy, seductive; Roudra, (male), passionate and powerful and female — petulant and provoking.

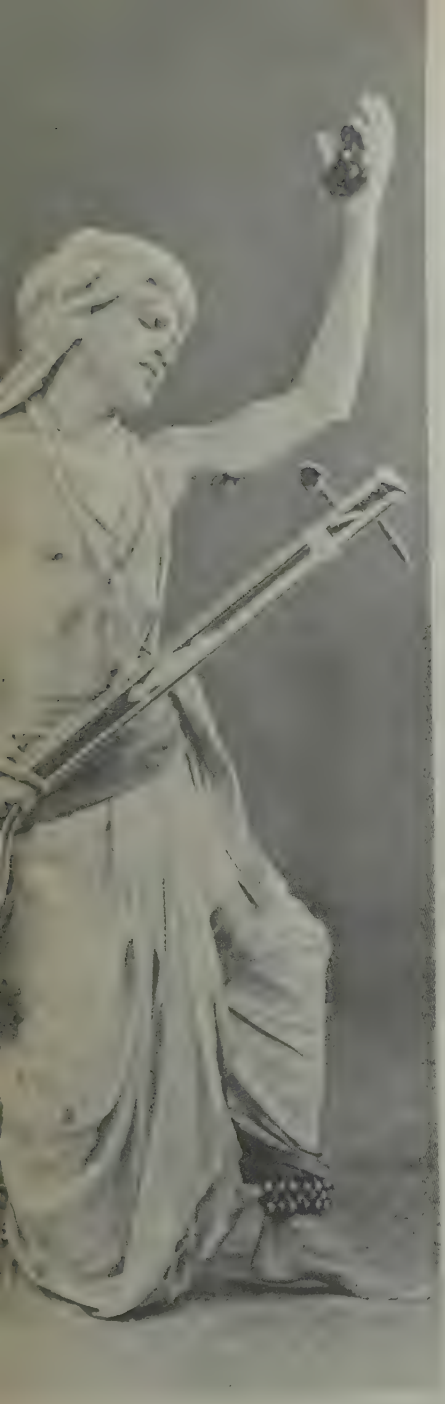
"Part of the training of a male dancer in ancient India was to dance like a female. This was done with a slight exaggeration, but was most effective.

"Dance is not only for Sringara, for seduction," said Dhananyajan. "It is our fifth Veda, which contains all the elements of philosophy, the fine arts, physical fitness, beauty, eroticism everything combined into one in the typical Hindu tradition.

"I think the time has come to break old taboos.

"Restore the self-respect of male dancers and you will restore vigour and vitality to Bharata Natyam," concluded the young dance maestro, who runs a popular dance school.

ABOVE: Dhananjayan in a classic pose and LEFT: as a hunter in a dance drama.



tion has rediscovered and resurrected on the stage more than 15 dance dramas which used to be performed in temples and palaces in ancient times. As Nataraj felt that there was little scope in Thandava (performed by men) in Bharatha Natyam, he learnt Kathakali under the Kathakali exponent, Narayama Namboodri, for a few years and this enabled him to absorb fully the nuances of classical dance forms.

The Natana Kala Nilayam's first dance drama was "Nirvana", the story of a Buddhist monk. This was followed by ballets like "Siva Sakthi", "Karthikeya Thandavam", "Maha Kavi Kalidas" "Andal Kalyanam" and many others. The Nilayam has staged a ballet on the life of the great poet Thiruvalluvar and Vasuki his wife. Cutting across religious barriers, they have staged dance dramas on Jesus Christ, and Annai Velankanni.

The noteworthy feature of these dance dramas is that the songs of the dramas are as far as possible, from the early works on the respective subject. For example, only the "Thirukural" was used for expressing the story of Thiruvalluvar and Sangeetha Maha Guru Thyagaraja's krithis were used in the ballet named after him. Mostly, the songs of the ballets are in Tamil.

What has contributed to the success of the Natya Kala Nilayam's plays is Nataraj's tireless

NATRAJ AND SAKUNTHALA:

A DANCING COUPLE

2

NATRAJ AND HIS WIFE SAKUNTHALA ARE BOTH DISTINGUISHED BHARATA NATYAM DANCERS WHOSE NATANA KALA NILAYAM HAS STAGED SEVERAL FORGOTTEN DANCE DRAMAS

Shanthi Gopalan

It is rare for a couple to be engaged in the same profession and achieve acclaim in it too. Natraj and his wife Sakunthala of Madras are such a couple — a popular dancing duo.

This couple founded the Natana Kala Nilayam whose ballets are acclaimed throughout South India.

Following tradition, Natraj took to classical dance at a very early age. His guru was the famous Duraiswamy Nattuvanar of Madurai. He has given numerous Bharata Natyam recitals throughout India for almost 19 years. We can even say that he initated the practice of men giving Bharata Nathyam recitals on the stage in modern times.

On the other hand, his wife Sakunthala started dancing at the age of 13. Her guru was the famous Valuvur Ramaiah Pillai, but she is proud that her guru in ballet was her husband.

The Natana Kala Nilayam was started in the year 1944 and was registered in 1962. This institu-

3

research into historical backgrounds. He plans the ballet extensively. As far as possible he creates the mood of the period on the stage. He consults anybody who knows anything about the subject of the ballet. He contacts collectors of antiques and picks up items for use in his plays. The composition of the songs takes at least two months. Nataraj himself composes some of the songs. The costumes, ornaments, props and other effects used in the ballets are authentic. Unlike the cloth or plywood paintings usually used for backdrops, scenes, etc. Nataraj uses applique work done by a full-time art director.

"The group consists of 40 artistes altogether," says Natraj. "My only aim is to make the Natya Kala Nilayam a very big organisation. We spend about Rs. 40,000 to 50,000 for a ballet and incur a loss of about Rs. 10,000. We get grants from both the Central and the Tamil Nadu Governments. We have been recognised by the Sangeetha Nataka Academy."

"But what worries me," he continued," is the lack of public appreciation for plays and ballets these days. We spend about six months preparing one ballet and there is not enough encouragement at the end."

4

1. Natraj as the great saint-composer Thyagaraja of the South.

2. Natraj and Sakunthala, the husband-wife team.

3. The Natana Kala Nilayam stages Christian themes also.

4. A classic pose by husband and wife in the dance drama "Andal Thirukalyanam".

5. The couple as Siva and Parvathi in the dance-drama "Siva Sakti".

Sakunthala's comment on this was, "We cannot blame the public also. The trend of Bharatha Natyam should be changed. A Bharatha Natyam recital now consists of an Alarippu, a Jathiswaram, Varnam and Thillana. If you have seen one programme you have seen them all. So people are reluctant to spend their money on these programmes. We concentrate more on Abinayam. We combine Lasya and Thandava very effectively. We select the lives of very important people who are closely associated with our culture as the subject of our dance dramas. Sometimes it proves very difficult, for example, the lives of Thiruvalluvar and Thyagaraya give very little scope for dancing."

Then she turned to another problem. "In these days of high prices, launching of a ballet works out very costly. Sometimes we have even pledged our valuables to meet the expense. The public and the Government should encourage us more. We get many students for the dance classes we conduct in our Nilayam. But I wish we received more offers to stage our dance dramas. Of course once in a way we do get offers from some of the well-known private art academies here and in other parts of the country. Incidentally, we are going to participate in the Kalidas festival in Ujjain."

Natraj is currently engaged in research on "Theru Koothu" a kind of street drama of Tamil Nadu.

"Contrary to what they perform as 'Theru Koothu' these days," he commented, "It was perfect in every way 300 to 350 years ago. Just as Dr. Sivaram Karanth has revived and given new life to Yakshagana, I too want to bring to the 'Theru Koothu' the glory it deserves. In Silapathikaram a chapter is dedicated to 'Pathra Abinaya' which describes how a character should express himself."

His intense passion for his art has almost driven him into a state of indigence, but like so many others dedicated to a cause, he refuses to give up.

Both Nataraj and Sakunthala were conferred the title of "Kalai Mamani' by the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mahdram in recognition of their contribution to the revival of the ancient art of dance dramas. They certainly deserve it.

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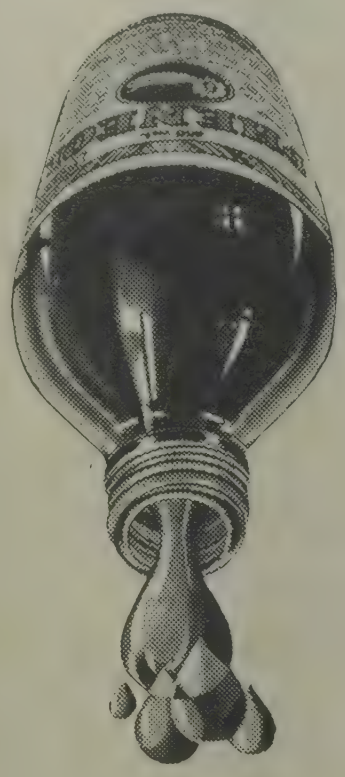

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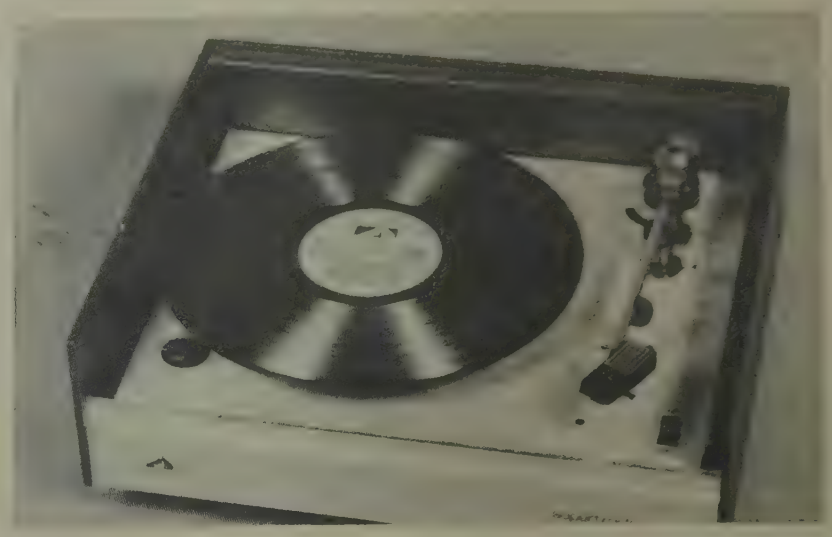

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Though the industry has built up an enviable repertoire of music in the seventy and odd decades of its existence in India, its catalogue is by no means record-breaking, in the absolute sense.

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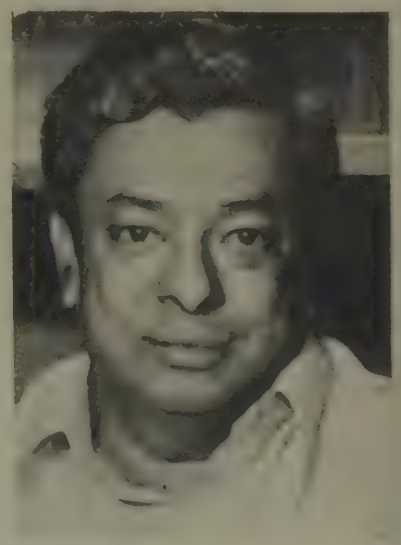
The Story Of AMUL

Though acclaimed as a model of rural development — not only for India but for the developing nations as well, Amul has been a victim of unbridled criticism initiated by vested interests. They have hit Amul below the belt, even linked it with the CIA. Our correspondent, desiring to investigate the veracity of the allegations made, met DR. VERGHESE KURIEN, Chief Executive of Amul for 25 years, who, though visibly upset, refutes the charges with his characteristic sharpness and wit.



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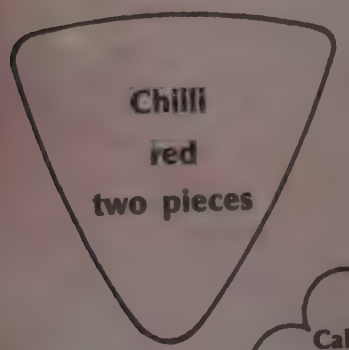
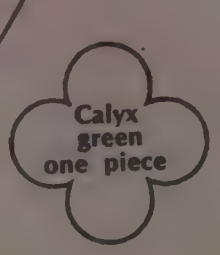
Run running stitches round the base and draw the thread together leaving a small opening. Through this stuff cottonwool evenly and firmly giving it the shape of a tomato. Flatten slightly at the top and base and stitch the opening. Run green thread on the pin cushion from top to bottom forming six sections — refer photograph.

Cut out the star-shaped calyx from the green felt and secure on the top with the adhesive.

Now cut out two triangular pieces from the red material and machine leaving out the top portion. Reverse. Stuff cottonwool firmly — shaping it like a chilli. Stitch the opening. Cut out the other calyx from the green felt and stick in position. Using green thread attach the chilli to the tomato at the calyx.

Photograph : Farokh Reporter





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WOMEN IN FOCUS

ROSEMARY SACHDEV

SUCCESSFUL ARCHITECT

Mrs. Rosemary Sachdev, an architect from Delhi, along with her husband, has won the 1st prize this year for designing an "A" type (1200 beds) hotel in the Janta Hotel Design Competition conducted by the India Tourism Development Corporation on behalf of the Department of Tourism.

"The basic requirement was to design a hotel which will be low in cost but will provide maximum facilities to the tourists," said Rosemary. "One of the conditions laid down by ITDC was that it should have natural ventilation as air-conditioning adds to the cost and our design gives maximum ventilation to all the rooms."

Rosemary, an Australian by birth, married an Indian about 15 years back and since then has made this country her home. She acts and dresses like a typical Indian woman and says that she has found perfect happiness in this country. Mother of two children, she says that she "wouldn't like to live anywhere else in the world."

She has also been teaching architecture in the School of Planning and Architecture, Department of Architecture, since 1964. She was teaching architecture in Australia before she got married.

The Sachdevs generally work together and like to do mostly big work like hotels and exhibitions. "We do houses only if some good friends ask for our help."

This couple also won an award for designing the Indian pavilion in Expo 70 held in Japan in 1969 in an open competition conducted by the Trade Fair Authority of India. They also design big educational institutions and have done complete master planning and designing of all the buildings of the Guru Nanak Dev University in Amritsar. They have designed the Modern School building in Vasant Vihar, Delhi.

The Sachdevs have also designed some hotels in Gulf countries where they work in association with another firm of architects.

"While designing a building," said Rosemary, "I do not force my personality on it. I tend to work keeping in view the functions of a building — whether it is a hotel, an educational institution or a memorial. This functional aspect should be expressed in a building so that just by looking at it a person can feel what it stands for.

Rosemary says that she prefers to use local material in a building to bringing items from another part of the country. If there is a special craft in a state she tries to use it while designing the interior. "But one cannot design any building these days on old traditional designs. It's no longer possible to go back to old Indian styles as they will be of no use in the modern age. In olden times the pace of life was different. One just cannot introduce traditional designs in buildings these days," she said.

She believes generally in designing houses in straight lines. "There is no relevance in putting up Mughal arches outside a building just to make it look Indian," she explained. "I think straight lines look beautiful, arches should be made only when they can fit into a building. In any case, arches are most impractical in a house as one cannot put curtains there. Straight lines can also be used in many different ways. One doesn't have to make a rectangular block always."

While designing anything, Rosemary first makes a sketch and then gives it to her assistants to work out the details. Then this detailed sketch is given to the carpenter to make a model. "For any job that I am doing, six to seven models are made before I finalise a design. I like to work with the models as they give me a three dimensional view," she says.

Rosemary says that her husband does most of the travelling when they have some work outside Delhi. "I like to stay in Delhi and look after my children. In any case, we try not to go out of Delhi at the same time. As we both know about each other's work it's no problem looking after one another's work too."

Rosemary finds her work very satisfying and works from morning to evening.

"I do not mind leaving my children for the whole day as long as I have a good ayah to look after them. Moreover, I think children of working mothers become more independent than children of mothers who stay at home all the time," she says. Besides doing her work, Rosemary does a lot of reading too — mostly books on history, travel, politics and biographies.

Jyotsana Kapoor

DINA PATEL

A DEDICATED DOCTOR

Frail and petite, Dr. Dina Patel has the distinction of being the first woman Dean of The Nowrosji Wadia Maternity Hospital and Post-Graduate Research Centre. For Dr. Patel it has been a long association with the hospital — starting as a student as "there was no maternity ward in K.E.M. in 1946." She joined the hospital as Resident Medical Officer after taking her M.D. in 1948. Since then she has not looked back.

"From the age of three I had wanted to become a doctor and I was lucky in not having any objections at home...actually it was the family doctor who provided the attraction," she laughed.

Does she ever regret opting for Gynaecology & Obstetrics?

"It is the hardest line...babies are not born by appointment... we have to slog, but I would choose the same again." With over three decades spent at Nowrosji Wadia Maternity Hospital in various capacities — as Senior Medical Officer, then Asst. Hon. Obstetrician, and later Hon. Obstetrician, how does she feel as Dean?

"It is a pleasure for me to be at the head of this Institute where I have spent all my life, besides, I know the probiems at all the different levels."

The post of Dean is an entirely honorary one. Along with supervising the day to day administration, she is also in charge of one of the six units of Gynaecology & Obstetrics. Thus, like any other visiting gynaecologist she has her share of surgery, wards and teaching to cope with.

Attached in an honorary capacity to the Parsi General and Noor Hospital, Dr. Patel also attends to her own clinic in the evenings That despite such a heavy schedule she has been actively involved in conducting rural family planning camps goes to her credit.

"There should be no compulsion or forcing," she vehemently states. "But I think a scheme of disincentives should be followed."

Consultant to the John Hopkins University, Baltimore, for use of the laparascope, she is currently involved in holding training courses for Indian doctors for the use of the laparascope in sterilisation of the female.

Her spare time she devotes to the Zonta Club, of which she is the Director. "A service oriented organisation of business and professional women....some of the projects we have undertaken are medical check-ups in the slums, essay competition on the International Year of the Child."

She is also fond of needlework and cooking, but "where is the time ?" She is "married to medicine,"

Deepa Arora

Today is a typical day for Pierre Henri Chalfont: he has supervised the showings of his autumn haute couture collection, developed an ou-la-la ensemble for an international Oscar-winning actress and three exquisite bedsheet designs for New Great Mills.

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PARVEEN BABI:

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Vijaya Irani

TIME WAS WHEN HER CAREER RATED ONLY A LOW PRIORITY, BUT TODAY IT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN HER LIFE

Time was when a glowing, bright-eyed, round faced glamour girl called Parveen Babi was a friend one could sit with, never knowing how time passed, while she spoke with earnest conviction about emotions, love, relationships, being and doing. One could learn quite a lot from those long sessions with her and marvel how perfectly beauty and the ability to gain knowledge from books and reading, have blended in her.

Now the face has become angular and sharper, and it holds the beholder with its depth of unspoken thoughts, heavy with feeling. A serenity seems to have come over her as if an aftermath of a storm.

Parveen now throws herself completely into her work, talking at length about the various concepts and ideas of her profession, just as she did once about things relating to life and living.

For a person who has said, in so many words, that a career is not the only thing in her life, in fact, it was only incidental, there has been a complete metamorphosis in her, which shows through even physically.

Parveen was shooting for the much-talked about R.K. Film, as yet untitled, but called Production No. 20 for the time being. Dabboo is her hero in the film, and she was in his house, ready with make-up, waiting for her shot to be called. She was there at the appointed hour, ten in the morning, and even till four in the evening she was waiting with her abundance of patience.

So, as she'd rather talk about films and her work than about life, literature and love, I started off with the R.K. film.

Is she feeling uppity having been signed on for a Raj Kapoor production?

The glow in her eyes brightens, but only for a second. Then she is the new professional personality. There can be no personal feeling about a role. It's just a job to be done. There's no feeling of triumph that she had outsmarted Zeenat, as so many folk allege. She is thinking on other lines, like the need for steady, hard work to consolidate her career, the need to give her best whatever the role she has accepted.

But I cannot help feeling she is throwing herself into this hard work on the rebound like one falls in love, gets jilted and either gets into another love-affair with a vengeance or takes up some tough assignment which will keep one busy enough to forget the heart-break.

Parveen's love-affair with her career started since she broke off with Kabir Bedi, and just as she had given him her all, she is now giving whatever she has — her talent, her time, her energy and her heart — to the roles she takes up.

There is no room in Parveen's life for past regrets and future fears. The calm that has settled itself like a mantle over her has come as the result of conscious self-training to think right, to think positive and to think realistic.

Her heart follows the dictates of her mind and that is the secret of her infinite sense of balance and utter calm. She has plenty of ambition, but she will achieve her goal only by systematic planning, working and improving, none of that feverish haste for her.

Example: You ask her which of her coming films is big and great.

"All my films are big for me," she answers with a smile, and she doesn't need to elaborate on that; just her contented look is enough to show she means it. So why should she feel unduly triumphant doing the RK Film?

"Razia Sultan" happens to be a favourite with her. "It is certainly different working with Kamal Amrohi, and refreshing too." She wishes she can have more challenging roles, but isn't complaining about the roles she now has. What she's set her heart upon is steady, sure progress.

Photograph : Girish Shukla

PART ONE

My Darling Clementina

Daphne Clair

"My Darling Clementina" was originally published by Mills and Boon Ltd., London (c) Daphne Clair Australian copyright 1978.

THEY were easily the two tallest people in the room. Bret Nelson, inveigled into attending the wedding and its aftermath, a noisy crowded reception where he knew practically no one, had expected to be bored and he was. Since his host, during his stay in Britain, was the bride's brother, politeness demanded his presence. And politeness dictated that he should conduct courteous if meaningless conversation with other guests, probably as bored as himself.

He couldn't help however, being slightly intrigued by the girl. At six feet three, he topped most of the guests by several inches — but so did she. He had already fobbed off several attempts by the well-meaning to introduce him to her. Bret Nelson had a habit of conducting his own affairs — business and private — with a minimum of interference from anyone else.

Later, when he saw that the girl was alone, gazing reflectively into an almost empty glass, he strolled over and introduced himself. Close up, she was even lovelier and the derisive gleam in the dark-fringed blue of her eyes puzzled him. And the fact that he had to look up slightly to her, disconcerted him.

"I'm Clem O'Gorman," she said, in answer to his polite overtures.

"Clem?" he repeated thoughtfully. "That's unusual for a girl. Is it short for something?"

"It's short for Clementina," she said. "Are you a friend of the bride?"

"I'm Bret Nelson," he said smiling. "I happen to be a guest of her brother at the moment. And you?"

"I work for the same firm as Elaine, the bride. She invited quite a number of us. It's a friendly sort of place."

"A dress making firm isn't it?"

"Yes, I work on the design side." She glanced round the room as though looking for a way to escape, an excuse to stop talking to him.

He wasn't going to accept a brush-off. That was not the kind of treatment he was used to, especially from women. He took her arm lightly and said, "Let's sit down."

"Why?" she asked, her sideways glance at him mocking. "Are you so uncomfortable, looking up to a woman for a change Mr. Nelson?"

"I just figured those six-inch heels of yours must make for uncomfortable standing — and you have been standing for sometime."

"How kind of you to think of it," she said dulcetly.

Seating himself beside her, he gave in to an impulse to needle her further. Pleasantly he asked, "Is that hair natural?"

"No," her voice was coolly indifferent. "I have it colour rinsed and set every week by a very good hair dresser. My eyelashes are false too."

He flicked an appraising glance over her and said solemnly, "I see. And what do you look like without your false teeth and your wooden leg?" She threw back her head and laughed, a delicious sound, warm and throaty.

"I apologise," he said. But she shook her head.

"No, fair's fair. The fact is, I was determined not to like you."

"My I ask why?"

She confessed, "It's just that half the people here have been trying to throw me at you."

"Yes, I gathered they thought we'd make an ideal couple. What are you doing after all this is over?" he asked. "Can I buy you some coffee?" She hesitated and he was sure she was going to refuse. Then she said, "Thank you very much, I'd like that."

They lingered over coffee and he told her that he was in Britain to look at heavy roading and construction machinery. In partnership with one of his brothers and a friend, he ran a company which specialised in selling and hiring these machines. Clem gathered he was the senior partner. He had been in Britain three weeks and was due to return home in another five weeks, having made arrangements for many thousands of dollars' worth of machinery to follow him by sea.

She asked about his family. Apart from his brother Ken who shared the business, he had two other brother — Thad, who was a surveyor and Carl, a teacher.

"And a sister," he added. "Nicola is married. So is Ken. I'm the oldest."

"And your parents?"

"Hale and hearty, thank goodness. We all keep an eye on them as far as we're able."

They spent a lot of time together over the next few weeks. Bret asked her to show him London, making no bones about wanting to see all the things that tourists usually saw — Buckingham Palace and the Tower of London. He was also fascinated by the history ofthe city. Clem found herself looking at historic places and buildings with new eyes, as Bret said, "You know, where I come from, a hundred-

year-old building is old. And here we are, talking about the thirteenth century. It's incredible to me."

And then she would ask him more about New Zealand and listen avidly as he talked of the history of the Maoris who had been there long before the European adventurers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

They discovered a mutual interest in exotic foods and delighted in exploring Chinese, Indian, Greek and Italian restaurants. Then one evening, Clem volunteered to cook a meal at her flat for them.

Clem began to be aware, in the next few days, that time was running out for them. Try as she would not to think about the future, to enjoy the moment without thought for tomorrow, her pleasure in Bret's company had been always shadowed by the knowledge of the inevitable parting. One evening, when she had asked him in for coffee after an outing, he asked her bluntly if she had any family.

"No," she replied. She was surprised because she had always managed quite easily to put him off the subject before. Now here he was with a direct frontal attack.

"Are you an orphan?" he persisted.

BEGINNING A NEW MILLS AND BOON SERIAL — THE STORY OF CLEMENTINA O' GORMAN, A DRESS DESIGNER IN A LONDON FIRM, AND BRET NELSON, A YOUNG BUSINESS MAN FROM NEW ZEALAND

"I am now." She hated talking about herself and he must have perceived it, but he just waited quietly, his eyes on her face.

"My mother died five years ago, my father a couple of years before that," she said slowly.

"What were they like?"

She looked at him in astonishment bordering on resentment.

"That can't possibly interest you!" she exclaimed.

"Why not? I've talked freely about my family to you. Well, for a change, I'd like to hear about your family."

"There was only me," she said. "You see, there's nothing to tell."

"What was your mother like?"

"Small and gentle. She had brown eyes and very fine soft hair. When I was a little girl, I used to brush it for her sometimes. But she cut it after my father died."

"Why then?" he asked curiously. "It sounds like an extravagant expression of grief."

"Oh no!" her voice was suddenly hard. "it was an expression of freedom. She only kept it long because he wanted her to."

"Freedom? Didn't they get along?"

"My mother got on with everyone. She was too gentle not to. My father. . ." she paused. "I didn't have a happy childhood like you Bret. I don't want to talk about it, if you don't mind."

"I'm sorry. I didn't want to upset you. One more question. You must have other relatives. Are you in touch with them?"

"No. As far as I know, they're all in Ireland, and I doubt if they even know I exist."

"So you are Irish. . ."

"No. I was born here. My mother was English and she was an orphan. She was a nanny with some wealthy English family and used to travel with them when they visited friends. That's how my father met her, when the family visited his Irish castle. His family was incredibly feudal."

"He owned a castle?"

"His family did. He was a younger son."

"Who ran off with the nursemaid? I take it the family lost touch with your Irish relatives?"

"Something like that."

"Do you intend to have a family when you marry?"

"Yes, of course, if I marry. At the moment I have no such intention."

"What would it take to make you change your mind?"

It was, she reminded herself, a purely hypothetical question. "The right man of course," she said smiling lightly.

"And what sort of man would the right man be?" Bret asked.

"Kind," Clem said at last. "Even-tempered and kind. Reasonable and fair, not wanting to dominate all the time. Faithful. Fond of children. Gentle and loving."

"Will I make up for drawing out your innermost confidences, if I tell you what I'd be looking for in a wife?"

"No," she said suddenly not wanting to know. "This is a silly conversation anyway. I don't know how on earth we got on to the subject."

"I can take a hint," said Bret, standing up.

At the door, ready to leave, he paused and looked at her smiling. "You know," he told her, "your list of necessary qualities in a husband could do with some revision." "I don't know what on earth you mean!" Her voice was coolly amused.

"What you're looking for," he said, "sounds to me more like a father than a husband. Think about it."

He had shut the door on her astonished face before she could reply.

* * *

She didn't see him for several days after that, and although once or twice her mind recalled parts of the rather odd conversation, she refused to dwell on it, telling herself that Bret had probably forgotten all about it anyway.

On Sunday, Clem was awake early. She heard bells in the distance, and on a sudden impulse decided to go to church. When she returned, with a large flame coloured scarf dangling from her fingers, Bret was leaning against her door.

"I wasn't sure if you were sleeping the sleep of the just, or had gone out early just to avoid me," he said as he followed her in.

"I went out early to go to church," she said.

- "Did you lay your sword on the altar?"

She didn't speak.

"What are you afraid of? This?" He slipped his fingers under her hair and turned her lips to his, kissing her with great gentleness and finesse.

"Yes," she said, as he lifted his head.

"I have to say this today," he said. "Because there's not much time."

Clem stiffened. He was going to say goodbye. He would not have any more time to see her before he flew home.

"I have to fly home in ten days, time," he said. "Could I persuade you to come with me?"

Her first thought was that he was joking. She stood unmoving, unable to face him. He couldn't mean it. Or he did mean it, but could hardly expect her to accept it. Her hands moved to clutch the window sill in front of her and she made her voice light and steady. "Really Mr. Nelson," she said, "is this what's known as a proposition?"

To be continued

Mills and Boon books are available at all leading book shops and the MacMillan Company of India Limited.

FASHION OF THE MONTH

WIN-A-WARDROBE!

This is the sixth of 12 fashion features which will enable you to Win-A-Wardrobe from Delhi's exclusive boutique SOPHISTICATION. This unique scheme was announced in Eve's Weekly issues dated December 3, 1978 and January 13, 1979.

Outfits are designed and printed to suit individual moods and fancies while sarees have a touch of originality in prints with varied colour combinations.

You may be the lucky winner of this fabulous range of outfits. All you have to do is to clip and keep the coupons published every month along with the feature. A minimum of ten coupons, collected out of serial numbers 1-12, will entitle you to participate in the lucky draw.

DO NOT SEND INDIVIDUAL COUPONS

Photographs: Aditya Pavankar

6

Eve's Weekly / sophistication boutique

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1, Prizes are in the form of readymade garments. 1st Prize Rs. 10,000; 2nd Prize Rs. 5000; 3rd Prize Rs. 3000; PLUS ten Consolation Prizes Rs. 200 each.

2. Grand Fashion Show will be held by Sophistication/Eve's Weekly, around March, 1980. The three winners will be invited. They will be given return Railway Fare plus Rs. 200 for expenses.

3. A minimum of 10 coupons, out of coupons numbered 1—12 must be sent, in one lot, latest by **January 25, 1980,** after the publication of the 12th feature in December, to The Editor, Eve's Weekly Ltd., Peraj Building, Bombay Samachar Marg, Bombay-400 023.

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EVE TODAY

Underrated, if noticed at all, women's contributions to society have nevertheless been considerable. Spotlight on women achievers.

"LAKSHMI"

THE PHYSICIAN NOVELIST

"Readers cannot be hoodwinked these days by gimmicks. They judge the writers with great discernment. Only quality will survive. Irrelevant frills like glossy, attractive dust jackets, alluring pictures, are not enough to sell a book. Only a good book stands the test of time," said Dr. Thiripura Sundari, better known by her pseudonym "Lakshmi" to lakhs of Tamil readers, especially the women folk.

Lakshmi, a doyen among Tamil writers, has been writing for the past four decades with a short break of six years in between, due to other preoccupations. She settled in South Africa in 1955, when she got married to the late Mr. Kannabiran, an Indian settled in South Africa, then editor of a weekly, "Graphic", there. She returned to India in 1976, making about 20 trips to India during this period. Although she wanted to come back to India immediately after her husband's death in 1966, she could not do so, as she had several commitments there, like printing and publishing the weekly magazine of which her husband had been the editor, and working as a medical officer in the T.B. section of the State Health Department in Durban.

Even as a teenager, Lakshmi had wanted to write. Inspired by a novel serialised in a Tamil magazine, she wrote two interesting stories when she was in high school, but they were never published. Undaunted, she pursued this hobby of writing soon after joining the Stanley Medical College, Madras in 1939. It was a military hospital at that time.

In January, 1940 her first short story entitled, "Thaguntha Dhandanaiya?" (Is it a justified punishment?) which had a medical background, was published. Her first novel, "Bharani", was serialised in 1944 in the popular household weekly "Ananda Vikatan". Since then this prolific and progressive writer has written 25 novels, 500 short stories and six plays which have been broadcast over the AIR. So far, two of her novels have been made into films. "Penn Manam" (feminine mind) has been filmed in Tamil, and also in Hindi ("Hamrahi") and Telugu. This won her the Film Fans' Association's trophy for the best story (1963) apart from the Award given by the Madras Tamil Development Council. The other novel "Kanchanaiyin Kanavu" (Kanchanai's dream) has been picturised in Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam.

Another book, "Mithila Vilas", won an award for its litrary merit. She has also written medical books in Tamil on how to bring up children, common children's diseases and social diseases. She received an award from the Madras University for this, as the best medical books written for lay persons. Her essays, "Irunda Kandathil Ettu Aandugal" (Eight years in the dark continent) were equally acclaimed by her readers. These were reminiscences of her life in South Africa. She feels that Indians settled there have a bleak future, although they live comfortably.

Why did she choose the pen-name "Lakshmi"?

Her granny's sister, called Mahalakshmi, was a child widow who had lost her husband at the tender age of 10. Her head was shaved immediately according to the then prevailing South Indian Brahmin custom.

The writer admired the widow's beauty, serenity, gracefulness and felt very much her pitiable plight. Then and there, she resolved to do something to perpetuate her memory. Thus she chose her name as her pseudonym.

"Whenever I think of her austere, simple life, I cry," she told me emotionally.

She doesn't find any great difference in the position of Indian women over the years. It remains the same as it was when she went to South Africa. Of course, more girls are educated and employed now. Despite this, their position in society has not changed much. Male chauvinism, the dowry system, are all in existence. "Women have not yet emerged out of slavery, only they are educated slaves now!" she said ruefully. Men like Gandhiji onwards have advocated women's emancipation, but it will take a lot of time to get rid of outdated ideas, caste feelings and superstitions. "I don't say there is no hope, but it is a long process. Women will one day free themselves from all forms of shackles and fetters!"

What does she think of the recent proliferation of English and Tamil magazines?

"If healthy competition is there, it'd do a lot of good. Good writers will be encouraged."

What about the literary periodicals? "Only a very few magazines are particular about good language, enlightening the readers. Most stick to our hoary cultural heritage. Other go to the other extreme — their characters speak an anglicized Tamil, and they have highbrow, snooty, plagiarized stories. Tradition and our culture are considered to be old hat, hackneyed, by these writers."

How does "Lakshmi" view the recent new wave literature? The so-called "new wave" writings, she said, contain nothing new in them. 'New wave' has come to be identified with sexy stuff, obscenity, whereas actually "new wave" should have a new approach to life, a new set of expressions, ideas and techniques. Our art and literature today have in abundance things erotic and salacious."

Her writings are realistic, down to earth, with her characters drawn from real life. Invariably, all her novels have a doctor, who is kind, considerate, helpful and who is philosophical, methodical and conventional — in short, an ideal human being. "Lakshmi" does not write at a stretch and too much at a time as she feels her ideas and thoughts get diluted then. Apart from this, quantity will tend to affect quality and the readers too get confused if the same author writes novels in various magazines simultaneously.

She is of the opinion that novels and short stories should not only be entertaining but also be enlightening, educative and ennobling. She said with justifiable pride that in an opinion survey conducted recently on the writings of four famous Tamil writers including herself, the majority of readers said that they could identify themselves with the characters of Lakshmi's stories. Her novels are admired for their realistic as well as the homely touch in them. She doesn't like the idea of writing according to the suggestions of publishers.

In this connection, there is an anecdote. Once she was asked to stretch a serial she was doing for two or three more weeks by the editor of the weekly. She resented this and said so in no uncertain terms.

How does "Lakshmi", who is a practising doctor, manage to write so much?

"Actually, in between writing and medical practice, I get exhausted. Consequently, for short spells, I stop writing."

What are her hobbies?

She likes listening to Carnatic music, cooking and trying out new recipes, apart from reading a lot. Her favourites are Somerset Maugham, Oscar Wilde, A. J. Cronin, Ernest Hemingway, Wodehouse and Agatha Christie. She has a son who is in the III year at the Madras Stanley Medical College.

Malavika

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MUNCHIN' IN THE RAIN!

Premila Lal

Nibbly snacks are very popular these days. On a wet, rainy day when the appetite is at a height, all you need is hot crispy nibbles. You will never stop munching once you put your hands on them. Also, these savouries are small enough to eat with your fingers and too attractive to go unnoticed!

Here is a variety of handy snacky ideas that will surely win over your family's appetite this monsoon season!

KACHORI

250 grams green gram dal
250 grams flour
Salt to taste
250 grams oil
Green chillis to taste
1 tsp. aniseeds
1 tsp. coriander seeds
1 tsp. cummin seeds
1 tsp. red chilli powder
Chopped coriander leaves
A sprig of curry leaves
2 lemons

Soak the dal overnight. Drain and grind. Add salt, green chillis, aniseeds, coriander seeds, cummin, curry leaves and chopped coriander leaves. Fry this mixture in two tablespoons of oil till golden brown. Remove and add lime juice and red chilli powder. Add salt and one tablespoon of oil to the flour and knead into

Photograph : Farokh Reporter

a soft dough. Make small balls with a depression in the centre of each ball. Fill the centres with the dal filling. Close the opening. Deep fry till golden brown.

BATATA POHA

250 grams poha
3 potatoes
A sprig of curry leaves
Chopped coriander leaves
1 tsp. mustard seeds
1 tsp. cummin seeds
½ tsp. turmeric powder
Salt to taste
2 lemons
5 green chillis, chopped
½ cup grated coconut
1 tbsp. oil

Boil the potatoes. Peel and dice them. Heat oil. Lightly fry the mustard seeds, cummin seeds and curry leaves. When they begin to splutter add the turmeric powder and the green chillis. Add salt. Put in the diced potatoes and mix well. Now wash and soak the poha for five minutes. Drain and mix it lightly with the cooked potatoes. Add salt, if necessary. Mix in the juice of two lemons. Garnish with coriander leaves and grated coconut.

CHEESE TWISTS

120 grams self-raising flour
A pinch of salt and pepper
Red chilli powder to taste
30 grams cheese, grated
1 egg yolk
30 grams butter
1 tbsp. water

Sieve the flour, salt, chilli powder and pepper together. Rub in the butter until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Stir in the grated cheese and bind together with the egg yolk and water into a firm dough. Roll out the pastry into a fairly thick chappati. Cut into thin strips, one-fourth inch wide. Twist and bake in a hot even for 7-10 minutes. Cool.

SPICED BESAN ROLLS

1½ cups gram flour
¼ tsp. turmeric powder
1½ cups buttermilk
¼ tsp. sugar
Salt to taste
4 green chillis
3 tbsps. coconut grated
2 tsps. currants
½ bunch coriander leaves
1 large onion
A pinch of asafoetida
½ tsp. mustard seeds
1 tbsp. sweet oil

Mix flour, turmeric and buttermilk with two cups of water. Grind sugar, salt and chillis and add to the flour. Mix well, leaving no lumps. Cook on low fire until done. Spread out thinly in a thali while still hot. Cool. Cut into strips about two inches wide. Sprinkle with coconut, currants, chopped coriander leaves and onion. Roll up each strip neatly and serve.

MATTHIES

500 grams flour (maida)
240 grams butter
1 tbsp. cummin seeds
90 grams milk
A little hot water
Oil or ghee
Salt to taste

Sieve the flour. Heat the butter till smoky and pour into the flour. Mix well and knead. Add cummin seeds and salt. Gradually add the milk and a little hot water till a stiff dough is made. Knead for about 20 minutes. Two teaspoons of coarsely ground pepper may be added if the matthies are to be spiced. Roll out and cut into pieces. Heat the oil and deep fry the matthies.

COCONUT AND PLANTAIN FRITTERS

1 kg. flour
½ tsp. baking powder
A little vanilla essence
½ coconut grated
3 ripe green plantains
1-2 green plantains
1-2 eggs
1 tbsp. sugar

Add a little water to the flour and mix it into a thick batter. Add the baking powder, essence, grated coconut and mashed plantains. Mix well into a paste avoiding any lump formation. Stir in the beaten eggs and sugar. The mixture should not be either too thick or too thin. Drop by the spoonful into hot ghee and fry.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

KANNADA — 3

In response to request from readers, we now give you equivalent terms in various languages, to clip and keep for your record.

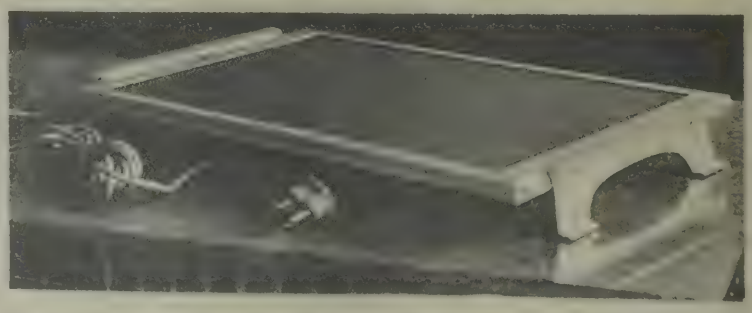
VEGETABLES

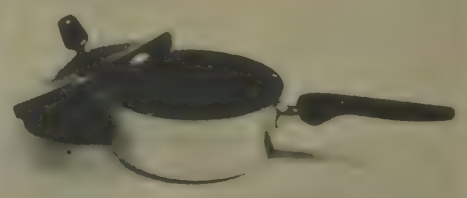
Cabbage — Elekosu
Drumstick — Nurgekai
French beans — Hurulikai
Beetroot — Beetroot
Carrot — Carrot
Coriander leaves — Kothambri sappu
Fresh mint — Pudina
Fenugreek leaves — Menthesappu
Brinjal — Badanekai
Bitter gourd — Hagalkai
Capsicum — Doddamenasu
Cauliflower — Hukosu
Cucumber — Mullu sauthekai
Onion — Neerulli
Radish — Mullangi
Snake gourd — Paduvalkai
Ladies finger — Bendekai
Green peas — Bataani
Potatoes — Alu gedde
Mushrooms — Naikode
Ridge Gourd — Hirekai
Spinach — Basale soppu
Yam — Suvarna gedde

NEW GIFTS FOR OUR MONTHLY COOKERY QUEENS

The Cookery Queen of the month will receive, in addition to the usual cash prize of Rs. 100.00,

1) A non-stick coated Saucette from TRUPTI INDUSTRIES, 2) A cash prize of Rs. 101.00 from WEIKFIELD, and 3) LIFELONG Food Warmer, Popular — model 625x365x65 mm from TRADING ENGINEERS, New Delhi.





So send in your original vegetarian or non-vegetarian recipes accompanied with a coupon to the Cookery Editor, Eve's Weekly, Bombay Samachar Marg, Bombay — 400 0[illegible].

RECIPES FROM OUR READERS

Miss Farva Rushdi, Madras.

FALOODA ICE CREAM

36 tsps. rose syrup
12 scoops vanilla ice-cream
9 tea-cups chilled milk
3 tbsps. falooda seeds
45 grams cornflour

Soak the falooda seeds in 4 tea cups of water and keep aside for two hours. Mix the cornflour well in 2¼ tea cups of water. Put to boil on a low flame. Stir constantly until the mixture becomes transparent.

Put the mixture in a "sev" press. Press into a vessel filled with ice cold water, and ice cubes. This falooda "sev" must be preserved in water.

Put 3 teaspoons of rose syrup, 1 tbsp. of soaked falooda seeds and 1 tbsp. of falooda "sev" in each glass. Fill three quarters of the glass with milk and top with a scoop of vanilla ice-cream.

Miss Sadhana Seth, New Delhi

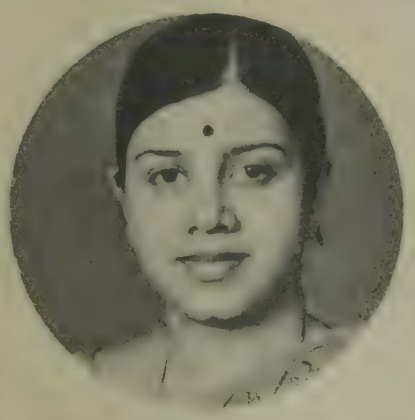
POTATOES AND PANEER IN GREEN MASALA CURRY

½ kg potatoes
200 grams paneer
2 bunches mint leaves
1 bunch coriander leaves
50 grams ginger
5 to 6 cloves garlic
100 grams tomatoes, chopped
½ tbsp. cummin seeds
1½ tsp. coriander powder
1½ tsp. red chilli powder
1 tsp. garam masala
A pinch of black salt
Salt to taste
1 cup water
1½ tsp. mango powder

Par boil the potatoes. Blanch them with a fork. Cut the paneer into fairly thick pieces. Fry the potatoes and paneer pieces separately. Take ½ tsp. of salt and sprinkle over the potatoes, and keep them aside for 15 to 20 minutes. Now cut the mint and coriander leaves. Grind them finely. Grate the ginger and garlic separately. Heat fat, fry ginger, garlic, cummin seeds and tomatoes. When done, add the coriander powder, garam masala, red chilli powder, black salt, mango powder and salt. Fry well. Then add the potatoes and all the paneer pieces leaving aside 4 to 5 pieces. Mix them nicely with masala. Add the ground mint and coriander leaves. Mix them nicely. Add a cup of water and bring to a boil. Cut the left-over paneer into tiny pieces and garnish the gravy. Serve hot with chappaties or boiled rice.

WEEKLY WINNER

RAJEE SARMA, Kerala.



Mrs. Sarma wins Rs. 50/- for this week's best recipe plus a 3-in-one Storefresh container from Trupti Industries, a gift hamper from Weikfield and a 1000 ml. Coconut Oil tin from KMP Oil Industries, Cochin.

JACK-FRUIT HALWA SANDWICH PUDDING

FOR THE HALWA:

250 grams jack-fruit
500 grams sugar
100 grams ghee
½ coconut, grated
7-8 cardamoms, powdered

FOR THE PUDDING:

1½ litre milk
7-8 tbsps. sugar
2-3 tbsps. custard powder
6 ripe bananas
7 drops ice-cream essence
Raisins and chopped nuts for decoration

FOR THE HALWA:

Cut the jack-fruit into small pices. Add a little water and 'pressure cook' well. Mash it, and place it in a thick bottomed vessel. Add sugar and the scraped coconut. Stir well, adding ghee, occasionally. When the mixture starts leaving the sides, add the powdered cardamoms. Mix well and pour into a greased plate.

FOR THE PUDDING:

Add sugar to the milk and bring it to a boil. Mix the custard powder with a little cold milk. Gradually add the custard powder to the boiling milk and stir till it thickens. Remove from the fire, cool and add the ice-cream essence. Boil and mash the bananas. Put the mashed bananas in the custard and blend well for 3-4 minutes.

Pour half of the banana custard mixture into a round, flat bottomed dish. Over this, spread the halwa mixture evenly. Cover the halwa with the remaining half of the banana mixture. Garnish well with raisins and chopped nuts and keep in the fridge to set.

COOKERY CONTEST ANNOUNCEMENT

New Scheme for the Monthly Cookery Queen Contest

All cookery contestants fo the Monthly Cookery Queen Contest will have to send in their recipe — non-vegetarian or vegetarian — according to the subjects specified for each month. We give below subjects for the coming three months to enable you to send in your entries well in advance.

August, 1979
CUTLETS AND KABABS

September, 1979
CORN RECIPES

October, 1979
COOKING WITH LEFTOVERS

All entries for August should reach us latest by July 5, September entries by August 5, and October entries by September 5.

COOKERY CONTESTANTS!

Revised Contest Rules

1. Each recipe must be accompanied by this coupon.

2. The author of each selected entry will be informed in advance and requested to send a passport size photograph of herself to be published along with her recipe.

3. The recipe must be original and not copied from a cookery book, a magazine of any other published material The prize-winner shall have to sign a declaration to that effect before the announcement is made and the prize awarded.

Address your entries to the Cookery Editor, EVE'S WEEKLY, Bombay Samachar Marg, Bombay—400 023.

THE LITTLE WOMAN

by Don Tobin

I HAVE LOTS OF MONEY IN MY PURSE -
I CAN SEE BIG BUNDLES OF $20 BILLS -
AT LEAST $500 IN TENS -
MAYBE MORE -
WHEN I OPEN MY PURSE, MONEY WILL SPILL ALL OVER THE FLOOR -
EMPTY ?!!
4-1
SO MUCH FOR MIND OVER MATTER !
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THAT'S A LAUGH!

Two venerable citizens were talking about King Solomon.

"That old Solomon, by cracky, he was a mighty wise king," mused one of the philosophers. "All those wives and concubines; you know sometimes I wonder how he arranged to provide the necessary food for all those women."

"How he fed all those women doesn't interest me," said the second sage. "I just wonder what he was eating himself."

* * *

"I shall put you boys in this room," said the housekeeper. "You'll find it comfortable, for it has a feather bed."

At two o'clock in the morning one of the new students awoke his buddy.

"Change places with me, Eugene," he groaned, "it's my turn to be on the feather."

* * *

Two of three college girls who had grown up together, married, and thereafter continually twitted their spinster friend with tactless remarks about her unhappy condition. She laughed off their comments good-naturedly until one day they went a bit too far.

"Now tell us truthfully," they pestered, "have you ever really had a chance to marry?"

With a withering glance, she retorted, "Suppose you two ask your husbands."

* * *

The late Fred Allen, respected throughout show business for his generosity, was no less respected for his quick wit. One day he heard a fading glamour boy, sitting for some publicity stills, rebuke the photographer.

"You're not," complained the self-admiring actor, "photographing my best side."

"No wonder," shot back Allen, "you're sitting on it."

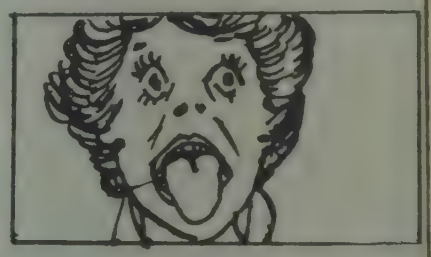
* * *

A patient found his absent minded doctor going round and round in a revolving door of a store. "What's the trouble?" asked the patient.

"I can't remember whether I'm on my way in or on my way out," said the doctor.

* * *

A woman who was noted for being a great talker, went to see her doctor and she went on and on and on about her symptoms. After a while the doctor said: "Stick



out your tongue please." The woman did so. "Now," said the doctor, "keep it there till I've told you what to do in order to get well."

* * *

Doctor (to Mrs. Perkins whose husband is ill) "Has he had any lucid intervals?"

Mrs. Perkins (with dignity): "He's had nothing except what you ordered, doctor."

* * *

Compiled by George Fegradoe

ARTIST OF THE MONTH

Introducing women in the art world, whose work contributes significantly to contemporary Indian art.

ANUPAM SUD :

ARTIST IN MANY MEDIA

S. S. Bhatti

In modern times women have done extremely well in all fields — from politics to pedagogy, and from science to social service. The fine arts are no exception.

Anupam Sud, 34, and unmarried, is an artist of exceptional merit. She sculpts, paints, and prints with equal facility.

Way back in 1961 Anupam had two choices — mathematics and painting. Persuaded by her father to take up painting, she scarcely managed to get casual studentship at the College of Art, Delhi,

while she was a student of Maths (Hons). It was not until a year later that she was admitted as a regular student. Although she does not concur with my view,her deep interest in Mathematics gives her a penchant for precision, order and finesse.

Short, bespectacled and somewhat shy, Anupam is accomplished in many ways. She has studied Graphics at the Slade School, London, on a British Council scholarship. She has held solo shows of her paintings and graphics, participated in various national exhibitions since she took her Diploma in Fine Arts in 1967. She has taken part in several group shows in India and abroad, including Triennales and the International Biennale of Prints in Yugoslavia, shows in U.S.A. and Australia.

Anupam has several awards to her credit. These include President of India's Gold Medal at the International Women's Art Exhibition, 1975, AIFACS (All India Fine Arts & Crafts Society) cash awards, First Prize at the Women's Art Exhibition, award at the third All India Portrait Exhibition, the National Award of the Lalit Kala Akademy 1973, and so on.

Anupam's work was represented in the Touring Exhibition to five East European countries by the Lalit Kala Akademy, New Delhi, 1976, and the IV Triennale. They are to be found with private collectors in India, Europe, and U.S.A. including the Library of Congress, Washington, the Lalit Kala Akademy, and the College of Art, New Delhi.

Anupam Sud's work is in a class by itself. It is a poetic manifestation of the eerie majesty of man's nameless yearnings and their intaglio on the face of time. Her work has developed through two distinct stages — the first was a constant wonderment at the organism of the world. It was an encounter with life in its botanical and biological forms. The second was a deep concern for human nature.

She has drawn her themes from her immediate contacts and surroundings. Her approach to the problem of what is "funny and hypocritical", is surgical — cold, incisive, and even cruel. But what she portrays is highly emotive. One doesn't "plainly see and realise it." One gets involved, drawn deep into the abyss of aesthetic experience — a maddening medley of awe, wonder, admiration and even aversion.

"Hovering Shadow" illustrates the first stage: encounter with life at the level of the seed whence it will sprout into a plant. Voracious plants devouring other forms of life. In spite of the simplicity of forms, their punctilious organisation and restrained colour, the result is weird and complex. One realises much more than one sees.

"Composition" is an apt description of her second stage work: encounter with human nature. The minds which do not think, and eyes which do not see, better be severed from the body. The mindless ferocity, this mad acquisitiveness of modern man. Money, money, money. The whole pursuit is shamelessly sensuous, unbecoming of an era of science and reason, inhuman.

Anupam's graphics are immaculate and her figures Michelangeloesque. Her work is a subtle satire on the contemporary situation. While the viewer is free to read his own meaning, including political prejudices, into her work, it must be stressed that she pursues art for the agony and ecstacy it brings her, in an ideology-free, objective way.

It is amazing that so much so well done, should come from some one who took up art merely because there was "nothing else that she could do better." At present Anupam resides in Chandigarh and works in a government organisation in the neighbouring industrial town of Mohali.

THE PREDICAMENT

Chandra Arora

"Oh no, not again, not again!" A thin cry escaped his mouth, while his arms lay crossed on the writing table, his head buried in them. He could feel the heat of his breath, a fever, and he sought solace and security in the depths of his own shoulders.

He was still a little dubious of his disposition, his state of mind. Long since, he'd started coming to terms with his varied, inconsistent feelings but could not help feeling that he'd not yet completely discovered himself. Sometimes, it even occurred to him, and then he was a little frightened, that he had no standing of his own, no definite value-system, that he had lead all his life under the influence of one type or another. Or was it that he had potentials of behaving in numerous ways and that, all along it had been him, his own self, only a different facet each time, so that it all compiled to make one, him?

Granted even that, he had to discover one path, one mode of living which would be nearest to and best suited for his psychological and biological setup. It was true he had this infinite ability and much appreciated capacity to adjust to people and environment, but that again had thrown him headlong on the sidewalk, with the jerk of a small incident, revealing to him that this was no place for him, that he'd again betrayed himself.

Each time he'd felt a distaste. Wasn't this what the psychologists would have called an "identity crisis"? He wondered, what other terminology they would have dug out of their abundant vocabulary to label his present state of mind. He didn't care to think of that. He couldn't help thinking that pushes and pulls from two extremes had set him on the line of mediocrity. Not as far as intelligence was concerned of course, but as far as convention and modernity were in question. Although he hated the use of these two words in relation to himself, he used them all the same for want of better substitutes.

He lifted his head to look around his small room in reminiscence, gazing at the books strewn across the floor, and his mangled bed. Showing signs of life. His life.

His eyes abandoned their focus. He remembered the time he had, rather weakly, submitted himself to the meaningful glances of Ritu. Ritu, the sari-clad eighteen-year-old, who had sworn her love for him and promised to be by his side all her life. He'd never mentioned it, but she'd somehow thought marriage was understood between them. She really was naive!

Sweet, but empty-headed. She could never participate in any discussions with him. She was the domesticated cat. So conditioned by her upbringing that all she thought of was of devoting a lifetime to a husband and building her own little Utopia around him. Never did it once occur to her that there could be something else, something more, required in a relationship. Companionship she never thought of. He'd put up with that game for more than a year and fooling himself into it (for he had found her charming) played the role of a future husband in a sacred relationship of "two people in true love."

Their relationship lasted because they seldom spoke — and ended for the same reason. Many evenings were spent in silent intimacies or frivolous talk. Sometimes they sat mum in the dim light of that restaurant, both engrossed in dreams of a happy future together. Good God! How easily he could convince himself! Always, always in terms of adjustment.

But the time came when he was conscious that he went to meet her only as a force of habit and felt less and less inclined towards those black eyes, complacent in their ignorance, that pink mouth, dutifully upturned when he wanted it and the slender body abandoning itself to his embraces. He wanted something more than a puppet! She had even begun to sense it and one day imploringly said, "I can't help feeling things are not the same."

He had felt at a loss, not expected it and just looked away. From then onwards he did not visit her. She wrote begging forgiveness if she had offended him in any way. But he had felt nothing, not even the traces of a slightly stirring emotion. He felt completely detached. He did not reply and things ended there.

Time slipped through weeks and months and he found himself devoting more and more time to work. However, the evenings left him madly craving for somebody who could share the monsoon with him. For August was torrential, and he saw little running streamlets of rain water reconcile and romance flooding the streets. He too was a stream, he thought, flowing along time in search of another miscible stream. He felt tremendous energies prancing through his body, waiting to be let out. He could uproot every tree on the roadside. Often he went for long rides on his bicycle and felt better when exhausted.

Then one day, chance delivered him into the company of those boys down the street who could best be described as "not-you-and-me." They had an unkempt appearance and could be seen in the same trousers the month round, they cooled their heels wherever they felt convenient — on the roadside, on somebody's doorsteps or anywhere else. There were no pretentious manners about them and no etiquette.

They were a trio who believed in themselves, oblivious of the world. Though often drunk, in them he found truth, sincerity, authenticity, and that was what mattered. They rarely attended college but read a lot and had more knowledge than the average student. He could never decide which mattered more. What he liked was their dissecting nature. They had their own meanings of virtue and vice: anything that came naturally was not evil. for can anything which is part of every humar being be evil? Unless man himself is vile. And man is not vile.

He knew this is what he'd always wanted — to shed all inhibitions, to allow himself a true existence and not be carried away by the momentum of the incongruous masses. So, he'd got himself accepted as a group member. He too began spending his time listening to music, those celestial strains, and lying around, looking with a cynic's eye at the world, and marvelling at the eternal impotence of life's phenomenon.

He felt his mind withdrawing from studies like the wave withdraws from the shore and read only that much of his books which would help him pass. He had no scruples about this life. It gave him space to know himself, act out his wishes. He was then invited to all the parties that his new found friends attended, which were many.

To cut a long story short, it was at one of these parties that he met Keerti, who was one of "their" type, a very interesting person. Both of them came to know each other at the dance, and it so happened that they began seeing a lot of each other. He was happy. He was enjoying life and was not going to look back except to spurn the uneventful, dreary life he'd earlier led. Laziness engulfed his every bone and brain cell and he forgot about work.

After all, the most important thing in life was to be happy.

Keerti dominated his mind and he relished the relationship he had with her. She was a free girl, uninhibited and true to her instincts. Her eyes sparkled with life and if one tried to detect it, beneath her ruffled brown hair, she could even pass as beautiful. She was good company, but he felt he'd approached that stage of realization when one knows that you always outgrow relationships. He'd come to accept it without any feeling of remorse.

He knew that their relationship would one day be no more than the past, a past which helped them to grow up, to mature. He was fascinated and pleased at this new sense of sensibility in himself. But to mature to what? he wondered. To death of course! It's bizzare how things make such sense while we are living through them.

That winter his friends decided to go out of town for a "change of scene" and he couldn't go. Couldn't go because of those back breaking, time killing exams which were approaching towards him, promising him a fortnight of nose-to-the-grindstone, even to pass after the year-long neglect.

He'd asked Keerti to stay on but she preferred to go and have fun rather than stick around to witness his struggle with the text-books. She was her own master, anyway. All the same he'd felt terribly let down and his spirits were low. He cursed everything and everyone around him and cursed those damned institutions for having examinations on their curriculum. For a week after they left, he'd make a hell for himself.

HE FANCIED HIMSELF THE LIBERATED YOUNG MAN, UNTRAMMELLED BY DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS, DOING HIS OWN THING, BUT WHEN DOUBTS ASSAILED, HIS SMUG PHILOSOPHY COLLAPSED

Remembering the days of togetherness with Keerti, made him miss her more than he thought was possible. He dreaded that he had fallen in love with her, or was it because he had seen so much of her that he felt so empty? All night weird dreams overtook his sleep. Sometimes he would miss his exams or leave the examination hall because he was looking for Keerti, then wake up, anxious and relieved to know it was a dream. At such moments he would sit up and start studying, frightened and determined not to let his dreams turn real.

The next day, when he sat at the dinner table, his mind did a somersault and he looked doubtful. He glanced at his father who seemed dog tired after the day's work, and his mother, a diligent housewife, was telling her husband how distraught she was because the maid-servant demanded a raise in her salary. He thought of all the expectations they held for their only son.

But why the hell should he do what was expected of him? He was going to do what he wanted to and not let anybody's expectations govern his life, not even his parents'. Wasn't it more important to live a life of true feeling? If he wasn't entitled to assert his being, what was the use of living? Won't they even let him discover himself? Why work all your life under restrictions and self-control and what not? Why not live truely? One had to die ultimately, so what difference did it make?

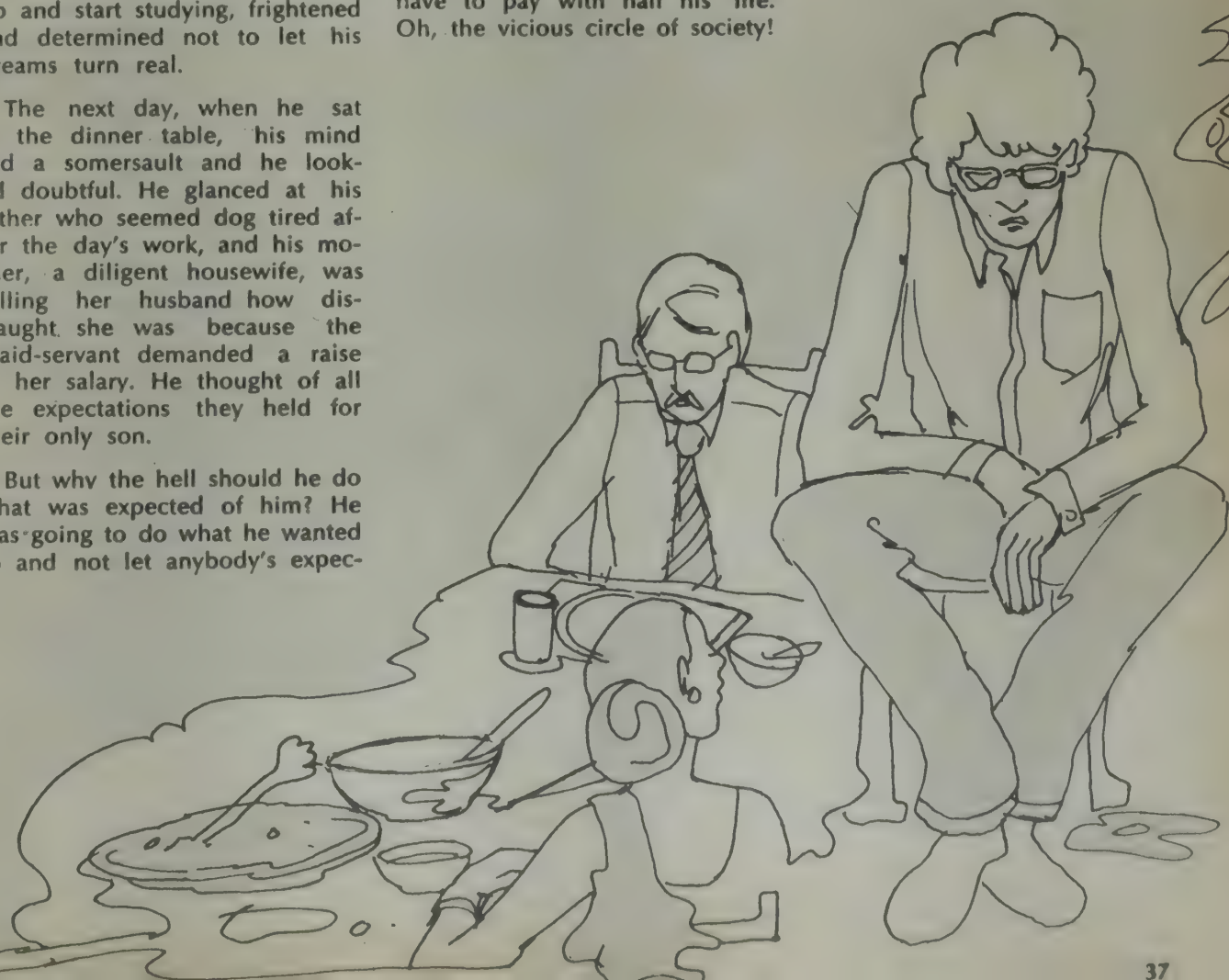
But then, for how long could he afford to live a carefree life? His parents weren't going to support him throughout his life. They expected him to earn one day, like all other men. One has to give away half of one's life, in order to be able to live the other half. How disgusting! He wanted to live all of it! But he knew it was not possible, that he wanted a home and a wife one day — all his own.

It was wrong that he should bother about another's opinion of him, but damn it! He knew it mattered. He wanted the approval of those around him (though God knows why it should be important) and for that he would have to pay with half his life. Oh, the vicious circle of society!

He remained quiet throughout dinner and his mother was concerned to see the frown on his forehead. She knew something was wrong, but made no enquiries.

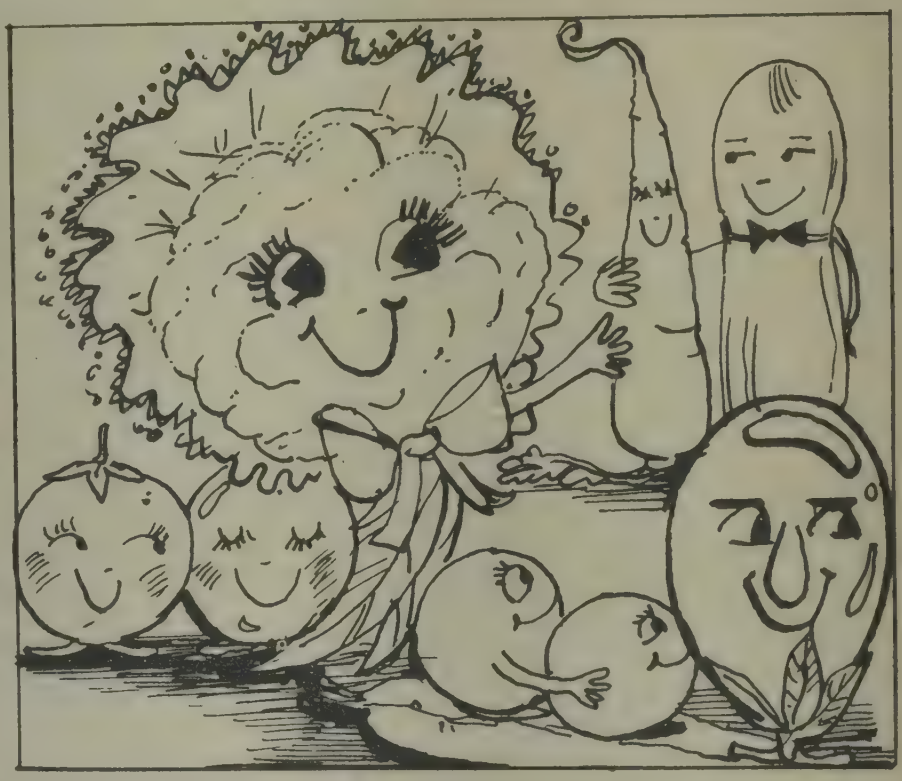
After dinner, he went up to the terrace and paced the floor. He felt lost. The mysterious, starless sky, that day and the impenetrable night to him seemed as much an enigma as he felt himself to be. He wondered if all that he had been living for was not an illusionary concept, an impractical idea. By driving himself with a particular aim instilled in life, he found that he was neglecting all other aspects. What did he want — security or liberty? Was he mislead? Once again?

He tried to correct the slight spinning of his head and choked a stifling atmosphere in his nose which held back the tears from dropping out of his eyes as he fumbled to register the fact that once again he was on the wrong track. Nothing else mattered now and his infatuation seemed but a trifle. His ambitions, his objective in life, came toppling down mercilessly as a child's brick game would, with one soft touch at its bottom most block.



MR. AND MRS. CUCUMBER

Daksha Hathi



Milan sat under the coconut tree in the garden. He was sulking. He had just received a spanking from his mother for not eating his vegetables.

He was a thin and dark little boy. When he smiled everybody loved him. He had sparkling teeth and happy eyes. But he never smiled at lunch or dinner time, because his mother scolded him dreadfully. For ignoring the vegetables! She coaxed and she begged, she scolded and pleaded. But he never, never, never ate vegetables. All he ate was rice and potatoes and lots of sugary sweets. And how his poor mother worried. So here he was, frowning under the coconut tree.

In the evening Milan was happy again. There was to be a party and the smell of good things cooking filled the house. The kitchen was an exciting place. Biryani was being made, with big fat potatoes in it. Then there was a large plate of potato chips all ready for the grown-ups to eat with beer. Milan popped a few into his mouth and sniffed happily at the chocolate cake baking in the oven. But before he could taste that, he was chased out of the kitchen.

Soon the garden was full of ladies in pretty shiny sarees and men in neat suits. Lights twinkled — yellow, blue and red, for the party had begun. Milan sat in a corner, busily eating a small mountain of potato chips, biryani and chocolate cake. Glad that mother was too busy to nag him about vegetables. He ate and he ate till at last his tummy was full and his eyes began to close. He was sleepy, but the bedroom was a long way off. Milan was a brave boy but when it grew dark and he had to climb the staircase, he liked to have his mother with him.

A cold gust of wind nipped his nose. Suddenly he thought of the warm kitchen and made his way there with a comic in his hand. Finding a cosy corner near the warm oven, he settled down to wait for mother. Somebody began talking loudly. Milan frowned and looked all round. A cucumber and a carrot were speaking. Milan rubbed his eyes and looked again. But he wasn't dreaming. There they were, talking away. And moreover, the cucumber had his arm around the carrot's waist.

Milan was so surprised that he gave a great shout. "Now, Now! Don't shout so, little boy!" said somebody very severely and poor Milan jumped again, nearly out of his skin. For it was a cauliflower, round and fluffy who was frowning at him. She wore a frilly white cap on her head and gloves on her hands to keep out the cold. "Who are you?" said Milan rather stupidly for he could see! "I'm Grandma Cauliflower," said she grandly. "And they are Mr. and Mrs Cucumber." "But that one is a carrot", protested Milan. Grandma Cauliflower replied, "Well, she's married to him and that makes her Mrs. Cucumber."

Milan stopped asking the crochety cauliflower questions and began to listen to the couple talking. "Well, dear," said the plump cucumber to his wife, "is the party over?" "Not yet, dear," said the wife. "They are still eating the pudding."

Said Grandma Cauliflower primly, "I do hope they have eaten the salad, it's so good for health." Just then four chillies came running up and called out shrilly, "Everyone ate salad except Milan and he is going to be a dull boy." And they all laughed rudely till the tears ran down their faces.

"Hush!" said a ponderous pumpkin. "He's only little and doesn't know what's good for him." Mr. Cucumber then turned to his wife, the former Miss Carrot, and asked, "Did the ladies look pretty, dear?" Said his wife, "Most of them did, but Mrs. Maniben looked ever so fat in her organdie — you know how it fluffs out. . . and oh dear, all she ate was potatoes and rice." Her husband shook his head gravely and Grandma said, "Soon she'll be so fat that she might get stuck in doorways." Giggle, giggle went the four chillies again and said, "That's what will happen to Milan and won't the girls at school laugh at him." Poor Milan's ears burned with embarrassment.

Just then a mixed group of vegetables joined the ones present. A brinjal, his coat shining deep purple, murmured, "If only children ate more of us — they would grow as strong as iron." Here the nasty chillies piped in again. "That silly boy Milan doesn't eat brinjals — and that's why he'll never get strong enough to do karate like Bruce Lee." This made Milan sit up smartly and listen harder than ever.

Mr. Cucumber then put his arm fondly round his wife and declared, "Nothing can be as good as carrots for bright eyes and red cheeks." His wife smiled happily. Just then "Mummy Mummy!" called several squeaky voices. It was a whole bunch of round green peas rolling up to hug Mrs. Cucumber. Up and down they leaped in a highly excited manner and Grandma Cauliflower scolded: "Now now, enough of that nonsense. What is the matter with you all?"

Said one little pea grinning from ear to ear, "Oh Grandma, it's because we are full of vitamins and proteins."

Four slender beans came up and leant elegantly against the oven wall. "We're good for health too, and so are beetroots, ladyfingers, cabbages and double beans." The chillies had been quarrelling hotly among themselves but now they said scornfully, "But Milan does not eat you for lunch and dinner!" "That's not our fault," said the beans indignantly, "if he refuses to even taste us how can he know that we are good to eat?" Milan remembered his mother pleading, "Just taste it, dear" and he blushed hotly with shame.

The peas jumped merrily and yelled, "We taste good in cauliflower curry!" "Yes, yes, but I have to be cleaned properly," said Grandma fussily, "because lots of insects sneak into my skirts and only lots of hot water with salt can rid me of the nasty little things."

Four fat round and brown-jacketed potatoes rolled up proudly to the group. Said the fattest one pompously, "You may be good for health but everyone eats us." A bunch of spinach said bitterly, "And that's why they grow fat and lazy." The chillies chimed in nastily: "Just like Milan!" And poor Milan was crestfallen. But just then the ginger who had been watching his daughters, the chillies, with a disapproving eye said sharply, "Now, there is no need to be so rude — perhaps Milan will be wiser one day and learn that vegetables are good for him."

"My my, look who's here," said Grandma Cauliflower, looking at a pair of tomatoes. They blushed shyly and said, "We had been to a ball and got back late." The fat yellow pumpkin boomed out kindly, "Now don't you scold the pretty dears, for they make such nourishing soup." Milan was very happy to hear this and shouted out, "Oh I eat soup and like it very much." And so loudly did he roar that all the vegetables dispersed hastily.

There was cauliflower curry and green peas for lunch the next day. When Milan's mother put rice and potatoes in his plate he said, "Could I have some curry, Mummy?" And she looked so surprised and pleased that he gave her his dearest smile And got a big hug in exchange!

PASSING THROUGH

TRICIA WHITEHEAD

THE RAG-TRADE IS BOOMING

The rag trade is booming all over the world, and helping the various countries to get better acquainted with the current fashion trends, is Tricia Whitehead, proprietor of FACES, a fashion consulting and buying company in London.

Tricia was in Bombay recently to promote the various magazines which her company brings out, to which garment manufacturers subscribe from all over the world. The full service consisting of 20 issues costs the Indian garment manufacturer $1500, while the Special Indian Package of 11 issues costs $1000. A Pre-edition Issue consisting of two copies costs $250.

And now, aimed more for the Indian exporter, Tricia will be briging out "Just Tops" — ten issues at $750. "This is because I have had many requests for mainly blouses, and I have been told that most of the exports from India by way of garments are blouses."

The reason for the high rates of subscription are: "This is an exclusive service available to our clients in advance of each season. We probably print about 250 copies a month unlike other fashion magazines with a printing run of 25,000 copies, and we are totally self-sufficient, with no advertisements or mail order offers to back us up. The magazine is also not available on the news-stands."

Tricia is no stranger to India and has been doing business for the past four years and has ten accounts which include prestigious exporters like Intercargt and Benaras Art House.

Trained as a secretary initially, Tricia joined the fashion house of Nigel French and worked in the buying office and report service for a year. In 1968 she started her own buying office when she represented importers as an agent. A year later she started the reporting service of FACES. Her clients are from India, Canada, USA, Australia, Hong Kong, Italy, France, S. America, Singapore, Taiwan, S. Africa, Japan, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia.

FACES is run with Tricia at the helm with a general manager, a fashion editor-cum-writer and a team of free-lance illustrators. It's round-the-clock, on-your-toes work involving a lot of travelling.

Tricia's comment on the coming fashion scene: "The trend is definitely feminine with emphasis on dressing more for the evening. The earthy fabrics are still in, but garments are softer and pleated. Even jackets and trousers are feminine. The shoulder pads will continue probably for another year as they are part of the accent on the Feminine Look."

Thirty-five year old Tricia Whitehead is the modern day jet-set woman running her own business for the past 10 years and planning to expand in the near future by trying her hand at children's and men's wear. "Of course, I'll have to double my staff," she said.

Meher Castelino

Get the best out of your Prestige

A Prestige pressure cooker is built to give you trouble-free service for a lifetime. Even if you bought your Prestige 20 years ago, we still want you to get the best out of it today.

The Prestige National Service Centre
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UNIVERSAL LITERACY

A DISTANT

FREE, UNIVERSAL EDUCATION, WHICH OUR CONSTITUTION PROMISED, SEEMS TO BE AS FAR AWAY AS IT WAS THREE DECADES AGO

T. N. Ninan

Every seventh Indian child who should start his or her schooling in the year dedicated to children will not do so. And unless official initiatives meet with an unusual degree of sucess, half the Indian children who do start their schooling this year will drop out without achieving effective literacy or anything else of note.

As with everything else in the country, the figures are stark and huge. To take just one example, half the world's illiterate population of 800 million is here in India. Worse, behind the statistics lies the story of an educational system and bureaucracy which has either remained stubbornly blind to the reasons for the failure to fulfil the 10-year promise in the Constitution, or has failed to come up with the right solutions, or has proved incapable of effecting them.

As a result, the report of the recent working group on elementary education, talks of universal enrolment as a "distant goal" of an adequate step-up in this direction as an "insurmountable task," and about the drop-out problem having been ignored so far and hence become "quite intractable." For its part, the National Plan of Action for the IYC says the general picture in children's education is "very dismal."

Meanwhile, those who were initially promised free and compulsory education up to the age of 14 have grown up unlettered, and have married and have had children. This second generation may also remain unlettered, so unless basic changes quickly come about, Indian chiidren will have illiterate parents well into the next century.

Th reasons for this sorry state are many. Primarily, those charged with providing education have failed to see what kind of education is needed, or having perceived the need, have neglected the task. State Governments have diverted funds meant for primary èducation to other purposes. And because the pressure groups in our politics comprise the relatively privileged, these governments have been persuaded into expanding secondary and university education much faster than primary schooling facilities. It is not surprising, therefore, that between 1965 and 1973, the enrolment ratio for elementary education fell in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra.

Around the time this discovery was being made, an official five-year blueprint proposed a radical departure from past policies and practices in an effort to correct these trends, and mooted multiple point entry, vocational training, non-formal education and other overdue changes. But nothing came of it, for none of the proposed reforms were implemented with a deliberate purpose. The primary school enrolment ratio went up by precisely one per cent in the four years of the Fifth Plan.

Now, in the year of the child, official plans speak once again of a change in policy and the introduction of measures which will ensure that three out of every five children who enter school do not drop out before they have achieved effective literacy. And if they do, they will be roped into non-formal education and part-time schooling, which are seen as the basic prescription for such drop-outs and which therefore get the pride of place in the Sixth Plan. Half of the proposed additional enrolment of 32 million will be in such non-formal and part-time education. Elementary education as a whole gets close to half of the total Plan budget for education.

Fair enough, because though the total state expenditure on education continues to be less than that on defence, there is now a consciousness of the need to make education more relevant to the student's environment, to improve its quality — frankly admitted as poor — so that a a school's holding power is improved, and to tackle the "tremendous, difficult and complicated" task with "carefuly prepared plans, good organization and an unprecedented and sustained effort."

But is all this little more than a bureaucratic effort at stirring prose, or does it amount to something more?

An affirmative answer would be easier if it were not for the past experience of well-intentioned reforms being aborted by partial and piecemeal implementation because of the obvious deficiences of the educational bureaucracy.

This is far short of drastic surgery on an educational system which at the moment transforms economic inequality into a personal inequality, and which thereby encourages the bellef that the better-offs are also better. Yet it is a beginning, and one which must be monitored closely so that at least the basic promise of 1950 approaches fulfilment by the latest target date of 1988.

For even this minimum objec-

So many of the youngsters seem to know the answers, but how long will they stay in school?

RIGHT: An attentive class, with more ready to enter, but we seem to lack the resources (or the political will) even for bare, crowded classrooms.

tive (which admittedly was under-estimated in 1950) to be achieved, the Government must take another look at some of its proposals for the Sixth Plan. For one thing, reference in only official documents to the need to bring about a "radical change in the attitude of the parents of non-enrolled children to education" is putting the cart before the bullock. As experience with the National Adult Education programme shows the unlettered are only too eager to soak in education that they consider relevant and useful.

The first need is, therefore, not a "mass movement" to make unlettered parents "see the need and the advantages of education," or enrolment drives with teachers taking an active part, or even economic lollipops like free meals, free books and free uniforms. All that is needed is an educational content that will automatically attract learners, and a time-table that makes attendance possible. The need for these is officially recognised but content and quality may not get in time, the importance they merit.

Indeed, the report last year of the working group on universalising elementary education talked of building "a close relation of mutual service and support between the schools and their communities." This objective too is essentially participative and non-bureaucratic in character, and hence alien to the structure of our educational system. Which is why this goal is not reflected in any concrete Plan programme. This points once again to a major weakness of our educational planning — the fact that it is the almost exclusive preserve of a bureaucracy.

The usefulness of schooling, it must be realised, depends on what it can lead to, by way of jobs or the opportunity to otherwise make use of the knowledge that has been acquired. In a society branded by its structured

GOAL STILL

The intelligence is there, but the opportunity? Even if there is a school in the neighbourhood, the child's economic condition may prevent it from getting even an elementary education.

LEFT: Simple sports in a village school, but the rural poor have no time for games, even in their childhood. Those who are seen playing are the luckier ones.

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inequality and by the sharp differences in the opportunities it offers at various levels, the child of scheduled caste parents or a young tribal (educationally neglected categories both) can see little good in even the best education if life as a whole limits opportunities severely. Education is nothing if not a means to change, and will amount to nothing if change itself is foreclosed. The two belong together.

Photographs : Unicef

You have to see Manilal on the stage to believe this. When he was speaking to me, he was a man — hardy in his looks, for farming is his profession by day. Slightly bald, clad in a dhoti and kurta, a striding walk, gentle courtesy towards women — that is Manilal Hirji Vyas.

MANILAL:

A MAN AT HOME

IN THE BHAVAI FOLK DRAMA, ALL ROLES ARE PLAYED ONLY BY MEN, AND 55-YEAR-OLD MANILAL HIRJI MAKES A SEDUCTIVE HEROINE WHO CAN TEACH WOMEN A FEW THINGS ABOUT FEMININE ALLURE

S. Swaminathan

Bhavai is a traditional folk drama form which has existed from the medieval period in Rajasthan, north Gujarat and Saurashtra. Manilal belongs to the Sarwad Bhavai Mandal in Saurashtra, which was started by his father Hirji and his uncle Keshavji, 75 years ago.

Bhavai is a total form of theatre in which music, dance and drama have equal importance. A unique feature of Bhavai is that all the dancers sing their songs themselves.

"It seems difficult to you, that we can dance to a fast rhythm, while we are singing. To us it is easy because we are trained when we are very young. Music and dance are very essential when we are playing a woman's role. It adds so much of colour and charm to our feminity.

"Even Lord Shiva was Ardhanareeswara — half man and half woman in his form. It is not difficult for a man to play a woman. I think that we are better at it than many women are.

"I am not referring to the women in pants and lungis, whom I see in the cities. My wife is a woman of the village, she strides about in the house while she works. I tease her sometimes, saying that a woman's walk should be gentle; she places the heel first on the ground and then the rest of the foot, turned in slightly — like this."

Manilal demonstrated his point, and I could see a woman's feet on the ground. "So you see, I have to teach my wife how to be seductive and feminine, but

Manilal Hirji is ready to make up for his role as Teja or Radha or Jasma.

Manilal as Jasma in "Jasma Odan" denouncing the king.

"I have been a woman for over 20 years, bahenji. I am a Bhavaiya, an artiste of Bhavai, and for us Bhavai is not just a form of entertainment. We offer our performances as prayers to Lord Shiva, who was the first actor, the eternal dancer.

"We worship Shakti in the form of Goddess Amba. We have a great regard for our women, as they are part of divine Shakti. So in our performances, women do not participate as artistes.

"We men play the roles of women. After all, acting is portraying a certain character. So we do a stree part as we would act any other role.

"I have been a woman for over twenty years, strange as this may seem to you. I started acting when I was just ten years old. Now I am. . . well as a man I can tell you that I am fifty-five now. So for forty five years, during the day I have been a man, and at night, on the stage I have been a woman, for I have specialised in playing the stree part."

she cannot teach me a single gesture of a woman, which I don't know.

"I know that you are wondering whether this creates any problem between my wife and me. I have heard that in the cities there are men who like to behave as women even in real life, but when I leave the stage, I am myself — a man. I have a huge family of eight children, and no emotional hang-ups."

A WOMAN ON THE STAGE

As Radha dancing a robust dance with Krishna in "Krishna Lēe la".

Manilal is a versatile artiste. I saw him playing the harmonium one night during a performance. He has enacted the roles of brave heroes like Prithviraj Chauhan and others.

"But I chose to specialise as a heroine. Most of the tradition veshas (plays) revolve round the relationship between a man and a woman. In most of the folk tales and legends of Gujarat, the woman's role is the more dominant one. It is full of complexities and as an artiste I get an opportunity to portray a wide range of emotions."

The tales of Gujarat abound in the stories of the courageous women who fight for their men and their principles, without any loss in their charm and feminity. Some of the women, such as Teja in "Zanda Zoolan Vesha" or Jasma of "Jasma Odan" exhibit a tremendous strength of character which Manilal vividly portrays on the stage.

The sociological significance behind the fact of men doing the women's roles can be understood in the context of the society around them. The Bhavai artistes travel from village to village, presenting their performances during the nights. If women travel with them, then their protection would pose a problem to the artistes.

The other problem which arises is a domestic one. The Bhavaiyas are on tour for nine months of the year, and if their women folk also travel with the troupe, then there would be no one to look after their families. Their practical difficulties, rather than any doubt about the acting abilities of women, have led to Bhavai being an exclusively male form of theatre.

Bhanot, ten-year-old son of Manilal (the youngest among his children) ready to follow in his father's footsteps.

In contemporary theatre presentations in the cities, sometimes men portray a woman's role, and often the actors display exaggerated gestures of the hands and the body, which create an unreal image of a woman.

In the case of the Bhavai artistes, the actors display all the finer nuances of the personality of a woman with great artistry. Manilal as the Radha of "Krishna Leela," and as the mahiyani (milk maid) of "Mahiyarino Usha", are two different types of women, but he is able to bring out even the minutest difference between these two types of women.

Under the starlit sky, on an open air stage, I had the opportunity of seeing Manilal dancing seductively to entice a wayward husband. Suddenly a man from the audience went on to the stage, patted Manilal's cheeks with great affection and presented him with money!

"This sort of a thing happens often in the villages. If we do a play very well, then there is a tremendous impact on the village audience. One such play was our "Kajodano Vesha", which deals with the evils of the dowry system. After seeing the play, in several villages, the members of the audience took a public oath to banish dowry in their region and they observed this oath.

"Through the centuries, we have helped solve many social problems in the rural communities with our thought provoking themes. Our dialogues are spontaneous throughout the performance as there are no written scripts. So we modify our dialogues according to the situations and this makes them more effective.

"This gives us great satisfaction in our profession, which is an essential part of our being. It is like having a dual personality, with a definite demarcation between them. Both are real in their own time, but I feel the joy of life when I am on the stage playing a role. When I am Radha and somebody calls out, 'Wah, Manilal', I only hear 'Wah, Radha!' for every man before me is Krishna."

The interview had to end, for the sun had set and it was time for the performance to begin. I saw Manilal walk away to the green room. I would see him again soon, as a woman with bells on her ankles, a seductive smile on her lips and a mischievous look in her eyes.

Photographs
Courtesy : Indian National Theatre
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davp 79/49

ALLAN GILL

SULTRY SEDUCTRESS OF THE NIGHT CLUBS

Fleming Rodrigues

The lights dim till the night-club is almost pitch dark. The music comes to a standstill, except for the drum which reaches a crescendo and then halts abruptly. Attention is focused on the illuminated stage and the beaming compere who dramatically announces, "And now ladies and gentlemen, for our exciting floorshow tonight. . . we present the exotic, the luscious, the one and only, sensational Fifi!"

The drum beating recommences, the orchestra springs back into action, a spotlight brightens a corner of the hall, through which emerges the voluptuous and heavily made-up Fifi. Clad in a shimmering black maxi, slit up to the thigh on one side, silver stiletto shoes and black fish-net stockings, she sways sensuously from side to side and glides from table to table, in a light flirtatious manner, moving her hips provocatively and fluttering her eyelashes at everybody. She sings a song with naughty, subtle undertones and gives a lilting laugh after every refrain.

Allan Gill

Fifi then seductively strips garment by garment in time to the slow romantic music, till she remains clad only in bra, panties and stockings. Generously endowed with flesh, on the lines of our film cabaret artistes like Helen and Bindu, she has the ecstatic men ogling open-mouthed. Fifi surveys them, picks upon one and casually starts undressing him. The elated man, whenever he can, paws savagely at Fifi, oblivious of his surroundings, even the wrath of his modest saree-clad wife.

WRATHFUL WIVES

After a few moments of teasing, Fifi slowly removes her bra. Incredulity gives way to amazement, then comprehension, and eventually to amusement as the flat-chested Fifi removes her elaborate blonde wig and smilingly struts out. Fifi is the pseudonym of Allan Gill, a female impersonator for almost 20 years!

The Allan I met the next day was a complete antithesis of the Fifi I had encountered the previous night. His excessive gesticulations had considerably sobered down, his voice had a deeper tone, his hair was short and black and his eyes weren't made up with sequins and mascara. Not only had his physical appearance changed drastically but his mannerisms had undergone an intriguing transformation. He seemed less short-tempered and cutting now and I had difficulty in associating the woman of yesterday with the man of today. He seemed some sort of schizophrenic and I told him so.

TWO PERSONALITIES IN ONE

Allan laughed good humouredly, and said, "Unless you get completely involved in the character you portray, you cannot give of your best. I can only sing in public when I am dressed to perform, never otherwise and I get very venomous and lash out if anyone, including my manager, dares to upset me before my show. Yes, in a way I am two totally different persons on and off stage."

A MALE AS A CABARET SIZZLER? YES, AND HE HAS THE MEN IN A LATHER OF EXCITEMENT — UNTIL THE CLIMAX WHEN HE THROWS HIS BRA AWAY

Sixteen years ago, when social norms were stricter than they are today, Allan took up dancing professionally. What urged him into the unusual career of female impersonation? What were the difficulties he faced initially? Besides, India, being a male dominated society, how did he cope with derogatory remarks and comments, and was he discriminated against in anyway?

"Sixteen years ago," began Allan, "I was very slim. My American manager's wife thought that if I wore a wig, gown and sang — a sort of scenic striptease with a song thrown in — it would be hilarious. So I rehearsed and of all my dances, my impersonations have always been the most popular. Surprisingly,

ALLAN GILL: SULTRY SEDUCTRESS OF THE NIGHT CLUBS

all through the years I have had no difficulty. Everyone who has seen my show keeps coming back for more, as I guess I am the only one doing this show in India. Derogatory remarks and comments? All artistes have to face them, and on the stage I am always one up on the other person. If there is a rude comment I know how to silence that particular person without getting nasty."

How was his show received by men, women and society in general?

"I am the centre of attraction when I am on stage," Allan replied confidently. "I make it a point to be exotic and I take two hours for my make-up and dressing. I love sophistication, which is evident throughout my show. The men ogle at me and I treat them like puppets. Even the women have been sporting — not the typical Sati Savitris though. They turn their faces away or hide in all the yards of fabric they wear, shocked to see me (a woman) making advances to their husbands. But then they generally laugh at the end of the show.

"You mentioned society. What society? A bunch of artificial people who ape the West! People who are for ever on edge, trying desperately to be sophisticated! I pity these affected people. Why can't they relax and be confortable? Anyway, whatever society you refer to, I've had no problems."

How did Allan react to homosexual advances that came his way?

MALE ADVANCES

"India has its quota of homosexuals in all walks of life," replied Allan, "but the advances I get, you can't really call homosexual. It is more men who refuse to believe I am not a woman and after the show insist on seeing me in my room."

Having performed all over the country, which people according to Allan made the best audience? Also, have people's attitudes changed over the years?

DULL,OR SMART ALECS

"You really cannot compare the attitude of people then and now, but in India people are either dull or try to be extra smart. To me, this doesn't make much difference as I am so used to them by now. The list of places where I have performed is quite long. When you have a good, intelligent audience, then automatically it becomes an exciting and amusing evening. In India, Calcutta has been my best audience, then Bombay and then Delhi. Of course, abroad it is just wild as they know a lot of international terms and are quick to catch on to jokes."

Allan feels that abroad he would "most certainly" have had a brighter future. "There, anyone who is artistic and is fit for a particular job does well as they pay you well, you live well and can afford holidays often. Here people exploit you and never give you a chance to come up. The only reason I am still here is because of my home and people, whom I look after and cherish and who are too old to travel."

Today Allan is a successful fashion designer and performs very rarely. What are the reasons for his premature "retirement," and does he miss the attention and limelight?

"The reasons I don't dance often nowadays is, firstly my designing takes up a considerable part of my time. Secondly, the money hoteliers offer you these days is disgusting. What has happened to cabaret? All you see now are cheap joints run by shady characters and these poor girls besides having to undress, expose their bodies and run off, also work continuously like a film show from 3.30 to 6.30 to 9.30 with no off days. Besides, hoteliers behave as if they are doing you a big favour. They grudgingly give you a dressing room — after you demand one — and then make you wait for your money. Oh! I could go on about the sick way they behave, so let's forget it. My dancing? Yes, I do miss it at times, but holding a steady job, you can wait for a good client and perform — either for a wedding or a function, and the money is also good."

BEWILDERMENT : ALLAN OR FIFI?

The next day I met Fifi in her dressing room minutes before her show. With a drink in one hand, a cigarette in the other and heavily made-up, "she" shrieked, "Come in reporter!" and then cooed, "will you have a drink darling?" I stared with a mixture of bewilderment, disbelief and fascination. She threw her head back, gave a high pitched laugh and said, "You will write a good article won't you? You have been my favourite reporter so far! Now join us, come be my guest at my show tonight. . ."

I wondered. . . whether I had made a mistake by interviewing Allan instead of Fifi!

PAPER PATTERN—8

Sheroo Cooper

COOPER'S TAILORING AND CUTTING ACADEMY

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Short Nightie

MEASUREMENTS :

Length = 99 cms or the length required.

Bust = 87 cms to 92 cms.

See the pull-out in this issue for the actual size paper pattern and instructions.

Answers To QUIZ NO. 1 Of The New Series

1. **Two: Queen Victoria and Queen Elizabeth II.**
2. **George Sand, Agatha Christie.**
3. **Razia Sultan.**
4. **Aphrodite.**
5. **Lata Mangeshkar.**
6. **The first woman to swim the English Channel. She performed the feat in the record time of 14 hours 39 minutes on August 6, 1926.**
7. **Madame Marie Curie (1867-1934). She shared with husband Pierre Curie and Antoine Henri Becquerel the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1903. The 1911 Chemistry prize she won outright.**
8. **Mata Hari.**
9. **Sharda in "Nimajannam" (Telugu), Chhaya Ganguli for her song "Aap ki yaad" in "Gaman".**
10. **Isabella Peron, widow of General Juan Peron was President of Argentina until overthrown by a military junta.**
11. **Florence Nightingale.**
12. **Margaret Thatcher.**

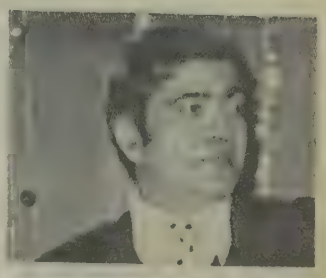
The following sent in all-correct solutions and share the prize money of Rs. 200 equally.

Baleshwar Raman, K. Balachander, C. Siddarth, Pushkala Raman and D. Ranjan of Madras; R. Ambarish of Bombay; Ravi Shankar Kaza of Hyderabad; Vimla Chugh of New Delhi; Sunil U. Guptan of Secunderabad; Raghu Nambiar of Bangalore; and Manju Mahanti of Shillong.

FRANKLY SPEAKING

Devi

RETURN OF THE "RED ROSE"



She flew from Chandigarh to become Delhi Princess at Eve's Weekly Beauty Contest. She bypassed my suggestion to join films in favour of Shashi Kapoor's advice that she should not, after which Poonam Dhillon caught Yash Chopra's eye on Eve's Weekly's cover, to finally crash on the screen in "Trishul". She was so sloppy in the film that I thought Shashi was right in advising her against films. Yash did not repeat her in "Kala Pathar" but as a consolation prize gave her the lead role in "Noorie", his mini project, and Poonam, apart from looking tender and clean, has given a poignant performance. Rajesh Khanna's verdict on the film at the "Noorie" premiere was "The girl is good." Before the week was out, he offered the "Red Rose" to Poonam, which she accepted and gave her autograph on a six-figure contract. "Red Rose" is the Hindi version of the original Tamil film. Bharathi Rajaa directs the film.

For about six months now, there have been sneak shows of "Red Rose" and everyone from Prakash Mehra to Vijayendra are all praise for the hero, Kamalahasan. But they had to replace Kamal with Rajesh for the Hindi version, as Kamal has as yet no romantic, rather no image at all, for the Hindi audience. I had only heard of Kamalahasan, never seen him on the screen or otherwise. He was introducd to me at the "Red Rose" muhurat-cum-cocktail-cum-dinner at Sun-n-Sand as the latest sex symbol from the South. They did not mention his name. I asked him stupid questions like how long have you been in films and whether he was married. Later, when I saw Vani Ganapathy coyly following him everywhere, I realisd that this was Kamalahasan. He liked us (press) so much that immediately after his wedding pheras he sped to the Filmfare function, garland and all, to receive his award. And marriage has changed Vani Ganapathy completely. She used to bore us on the T.V. by presenting Bharata Natyam in five parts over four weeks.

Apart from this couple who got lots of attention, there were no stars, nor many film personalities at the party. The muhurat had L. V. Prasad to direct the shot and Mohan Sehgal and Manmohan Desai to give the clap and switch on the camera. Rajesh came in fancy costume — some kind of county cap, striped shirt and spectacles. The crowd sprawled on the lawn were mostly relatives and friends of G. N. Shah (financier of the film) and the Madras folks. To be very exact, apart from the lead pair there were Vijayendra, Sheetal, Kim, Shivpuri, Ali Raza, Nimmi, Shammi, Amit Khanna of Navketan, Deb Mukerji, Sabu Mukerji and Om Prakash. This distributor-producer Ravi Kumar is a much courted personality. Raj Kapoor had filed suit against him, so had Dev Anand. "He is a fraud," said someone, "But intelligent," said Amit Khanna while relating the Dev episode to me. I think the correct word to describe him is "Enterprising." The party was divided into three parts — the non-filmic folk hogging on the lawn, press and filmfolks, headed by Om Prakash, getting drunk in the banquet hall and Rajesh Khanna with Dimple, Kamal-Vani, secretary Yusuf and Roopesh Kumar sulking in a suite upstairs.

PEOPLE AND EVENTS

BOMBAY

Borosil Glass Works Ltd., the makers of Corningware, held a baking contest at the Taj Mahal Hotel. The contest was open to Bombay residents only. Ninety-nine finalists were selected and prizes were awarded for both vegetarian and non-vegetarian categories. Originality and taste were the main criteria.

Mrs. P. Gangavaidyanathan was selected Corning Queen 1979 for her vegetarian dish, **Queen Borosil.** The judges were Mrs. Gulshan Ewing, Editor, **Eve's Weekly** and **Star & Style,** Mrs. Tarla Dalal, cookery expert and author of cook books, Mr. Satish Arora, Chief Chef, Taj Mahal Hotel, Mrs. Sarayu Nanavati and Mrs. Purnima Seth. Filmstar Tanuja was the Chief Guest. Consolation prizes were given to all selected entrants. The function included an exhibition and sale of Corning carafes and ovenware.

* * *

Mr. P. G. Kher, former Minister of Urban Development, Maharashtra, and Chairman of the Lijjat Papad Advisory Board, inaugurated the pilot Cottage Leather Art Division Unit at Borivili. This unit is being run under the technical guidance of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission. The Cottage Leather Unit will initially manufacture ladies' handbags with batik printing, money purses and other novelties in leather. Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad, an institution run by women, with 20 branches all over the country, has recently diversified into cottage leather industries.

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An exhibition of collages, paintings and drawings by Pradeep Nerurkar was held at the Jehangir Art Gallery. Mr. Nerurkar, a self-taught artist, is also a free-lance writer for Marathi dailies and magazines associated with young Marathi poets.

CALCUTTA

The West Bengal Co-ordinating Council of Women organised a premiere of the film "Aatish" to raise funds for their latest project — the adoption of four villages after floods had destroyed them. The Chief Guest was Nirupama Chatterjee, Minister for Social Welfare. Mrs. Renuka Ray, President of the WCC, spoke on their many projects.

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Gorky Sadan organized an exhibition of the cartoons of Mr. & Mrs. Karavaev. The Karavaevs are big names in the Soviet Union and have produced, besides cartoons, 20 cartoon films. These cartoons show the rare quality of representing reality in the framework of socio-political and economic events in a downright funny or a tragic-comic manner and have been displayed at many international exhibitions.

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Mr. Richard Brooks, the well-known Australian potter, displayed his art at the Academy of Fine Arts. He is touring India on a joint sponsorship by the Australian Crafts Board and the Indian Council for Cultural Rela-

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1. At the Corningware baking contest organised by Borosil Glass Works Ltd., in Bombay, Chief Guest Tanuja, hands over the first prize to Corning Queen, 1979, Mrs. P. Gangavaidyanathan. At left , are, (from left), Mrs. Purnima Seth, Mrs. Sarayu Nanavati, Mrs. Tarla Dalal, cookery expert, Mrs. Gulshan Ewing, Editor, Eve's Weekly and Star & Style, Mr. V. C. Nanavati, Senior Vice-President, Marketing and Business Development, Borosil Glass Works Ltd., Tanuja, Mr. A. K. Rao, Executive Vice-President, Operations, Borosil, and Mr. Satish Arora, Chief Chef, Taj Mahal Hotel.

2. Miss Thangam E. Philip, Principal, Institute of Hotel Management, Catering Technology and Applied Nutrition, Bombay, welcoming Mr. Sushil Kumar Shinde, Minister for Labour and Tourism, Maharashtra (extreme right), and Mr. Ajit Kerkar, Managing Director, The Indian Hotels Co. Ltd., on their arrival at the Valedictory function of the Institute.

tions. Mr. Brooks experiments with different forms of clay and his special clay mixing and firing at high temperature has produced a glaze which has been acclaimed by lovers of art pottery. Though the majority of the work shown was done in Australia, some pieces have been created by Mr. Brooks at the Calcutta workshop of the Vallauris Ceramique. He has been trained by the world famous potter, Mr. David Leach, as also by Japanese masters, the latter influence resulting in some unusual shapes in pottery.

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The Students' Union of the Calcutta University organized several cultural competitions. The best drama prize and those for direction and acting went to the Journalism Deparment. They also won the first prize for choirs and recitations.

SIMLA

Weston Electroniks Ltd., New Delhi, held its Weston Queen 1979 programme at Hotel Oberoi Cecil, Simla. This was the eleventh annual function organised by the company. Naintara Sharma of Simla was crowned Weston Queen and presented with a Weston TV set. The function is now a regular feature and is a popular summer attraction with the local folk as well as tourists in Simla.

BARODA

"Surabhi", an Art and Fashion emporium was inaugurated by renowned artiste Miss Pratibha Pandit in Baroda recently. The boutique is a sister concern of the Bombay and Trivandrum based firms, M/s. Surabhi and M/s. Surabhi International, who manufacture and export handicrafts, garments, knitted accessories and gems.

Surabhi offers a wide range of oxidised silver jewellery, carved ivory pieces, Mina and Kundan work, and a selection of sarees from different parts of the country.

OOTACAMUND

The Ootacamund Summer Festival was inaugurated by Mr. K. Raja Mohammed, Minister for Rural Industries, Tamil Nadu, at the Anna stadium.

The highlights of the Festival were a dance drama by Kalakshetra, classical dance recitals by Yamini Krishnamurthy and the Dhananjayans, Tamil and Kannada plays, and a flute concert by Ramani.

REQUEST FOR VOLUNTEER ASSISTANCE

Can you spend a part of your free time daily, to help in some of the projects of the Research Centre for the Blind? If so, kindly contact: NAB Louis Braille Memorial Research Centre, C/o The NAB Workshop for the Blind, Dr, Annie Besant Road, Prabhadevi, Bombay 400 025. Tel. 454247.

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3. Miss Pratibha Pandit lights the inaugural lamp at the opening of "Surabhi", the first Art and Fashion Emporium in Baroda.

4. Artist S. G. Ratna presents a bouquet to Rani Vijayadevi of Kotda Sangani on the occasion of the solo exhibition of her paintings in Bangalore.

5. The Cardiological Society of India, Bombay Chapter, hosted a cocktail party in honour of visiting heart specialists from U.K. Seen from left are, Dr. V. I. Mehta, Vice-President of the Society, Dr. L. Pathak, Secretary, Dr. Raphael Balcon, Dean of the Cardio-thoracic Institute in London, and Dr. B. K. Goyal, President of the Society.

6. Weston Electronics Ltd. organised its Weston Queen 1979 Contest at Simla at which Naintara Sharma was chosen Weston Queen. Flanking her are Geeta Kapoor (left), 1st runner-up, and Moina Jhala (right), 2nd runner up.

6

THIS WEEK FOR YOU

FOR THE WEEK JULY 1 — 7, 1979

John Naylor

IF IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY THIS WEEK :

A year to spread your wings, to aim high, to be a little more adventurous. A sudden change will be lucky for you, so welcome it, don't fight it! Both romance and money luck tie in with some form of communication, so keep on the move for success, take a friendly approach and mix more socially. Health trends should be better than average. If you have any trouble it will occur around the turn of the year and probably affect your skin or muscles due to nervous tension. An exciting, rather than a relaxed year so try to get some quiet moments by yourself. If married, an addition to the family is likely, especially if born on the 5th. If at present heart-free, there will be many chances to form fresh links.

ARIES

(Mar 22 — Apr. 20)

A new meeting could affect business or personal life, or both. One thing will tend to lead to another this week, so move around a bit, make minor changes. Do a follow-up to anything that has a potential future profit.

TAURUS

(Apr. 21 — May 21)

Life is not quite so pacy as of late, but keep your mind open to fresh ideas and get into whatever is going on. It is possible that you will have a change of heart about a current friendship but avoid impulsive action and keep matters harmonious for the time being.

GEMINI

(May 22 — June 21)

Your affairs are in an upswing with Mars now in your sign, bringing a vital influence to your activities. Push your luck and make opportunities for yourself — and price yourself high! This could be a week of heart-warming reunions, as well as some interesting new meetings.

CANCER

(June 22 — July 23)

Good indications for romance and fun for some time to come. Cash matters are also favoured and everything is moving towards a success period. Venus enters Cancer as this week ends — a rather lucky influence.

LEO

(July 24 — Aug. 23)

A friend will help present plans and, workwise, you have the chance to do something more interesting and more profitable. The stars are smiling on you, so give them a helping hand. Make the most of your friendly approach — informal contacts will help success.

VIRGO

(Aug. 24 — Sept. 23)

A goal that has been out of reach for some time past will soon be reached, but don't rush things; it is later this year that fortune will be flowing your way. Carefree activities and social life will cement business contacts.

LIBRA

(Sept. 24 — Oct. 23)

New people, places and ideas will be lucky for you. A good time to start something new, but if you are set on a big career change, tie up current loose ends satisfactorily. There is romance in the air, probably a person you met earlier in the year.

SCORPIO

(Oct. 24 — Nov. 22)

You will have no choice but to fit in with the wishes of others, so do it willingly. But life is more tranquil, with your popularity rising. Extra money to play with too. You may have neglected yourself recently through lack of time, so get busy on what you have to do!

SAGITTARIUS

(Nov. 23 — Dec. 22)

You can be too trusting, so watch where you place your loyalties. Try not to help rivals, for competition will be active for a few weeks at least. Better signs, cash-wise, however, after the 5th, but a rather unsettled time for romance.

CAPRICORN

(Dec. 23 — Jan. 20)

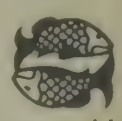
Planets in opposition to your sign indicate that it would be wise to curb your spending throughout July. There are few bargains around in any direction at present. If you are considering a change in appearance, better wait until next month.

AQUARIUS

(Jan. 21 — Feb. 19)

A lot of rearranging and restless atmosphere will be the pattern for you for some weeks so be as independent as you can. People may let you down in minor ways or seem to be devious. Take care not to mix up dates, lose track of important papers and so on.

PISCES



(Feb. 20 — Mar. 21)

A promising time for romance but you could be viewing someone through rose tinted spectacles at present! You are soft-hearted and must guard your own interests. However, the picture, is mainly, lucky, with a new relationship on the way. A good week to buy personal item or decorative goods for the home.

Eve's Weekly

Quiz: NEW SERIES No. 2

"HEGMAN"

1. Name the new Prime Minister of Canada and the new President of West Germany.
2. On July 21 this year, the world will celebrate the tenth anniversary of man landing on the moon. The command service module and the lunar module were given nicknames. What nicknames?
3. Which law in science is expressed by the equation PV=constant, P being the pressure and V, the volume at constant temperature of a gas?
4. Name the 24th President of the USA.
5. Name the only lady, a famous missionary, who has won the Jawaharlal Nehru Peace Award so far.
6. Name the Indian philosopher who founded the Adwaita philosophy.
7. Which are the two countries that border the Bay of Bengal on the north and north-east?
8. Ernest Hemingway won the Pulitzer Prize in 1954 for his novel "The Old Man and the Sea". What other award was Hemingway given on the strength of the same novel?
9. Name the film director who made "Bhuvan Shome", "Mrigaya", etc.
10. Who was the light heavy-weight boxing champion of the Olympic Games in 1960?
11. Which Russian political leader was said to have "discovered" America in 1959? (He also banged a shoe on the podium at the U.N.).
12. In fiction, whose mount was called Rosinante? What was the grand name adopted by the Spanish bookworm Senor Quixada?

This is the second of our new series of monthly quiz contests with a prize of Rs. 200 for the winner, that is, the person who sends an all correct solution. If more than that one do so, the prize money will be divided between them. The dealine for the answers is July 12, 1979.

There is no entry fee. Please write "Quiz No. 2" on the envelope.

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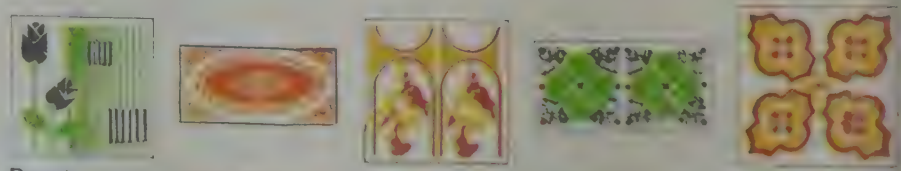

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